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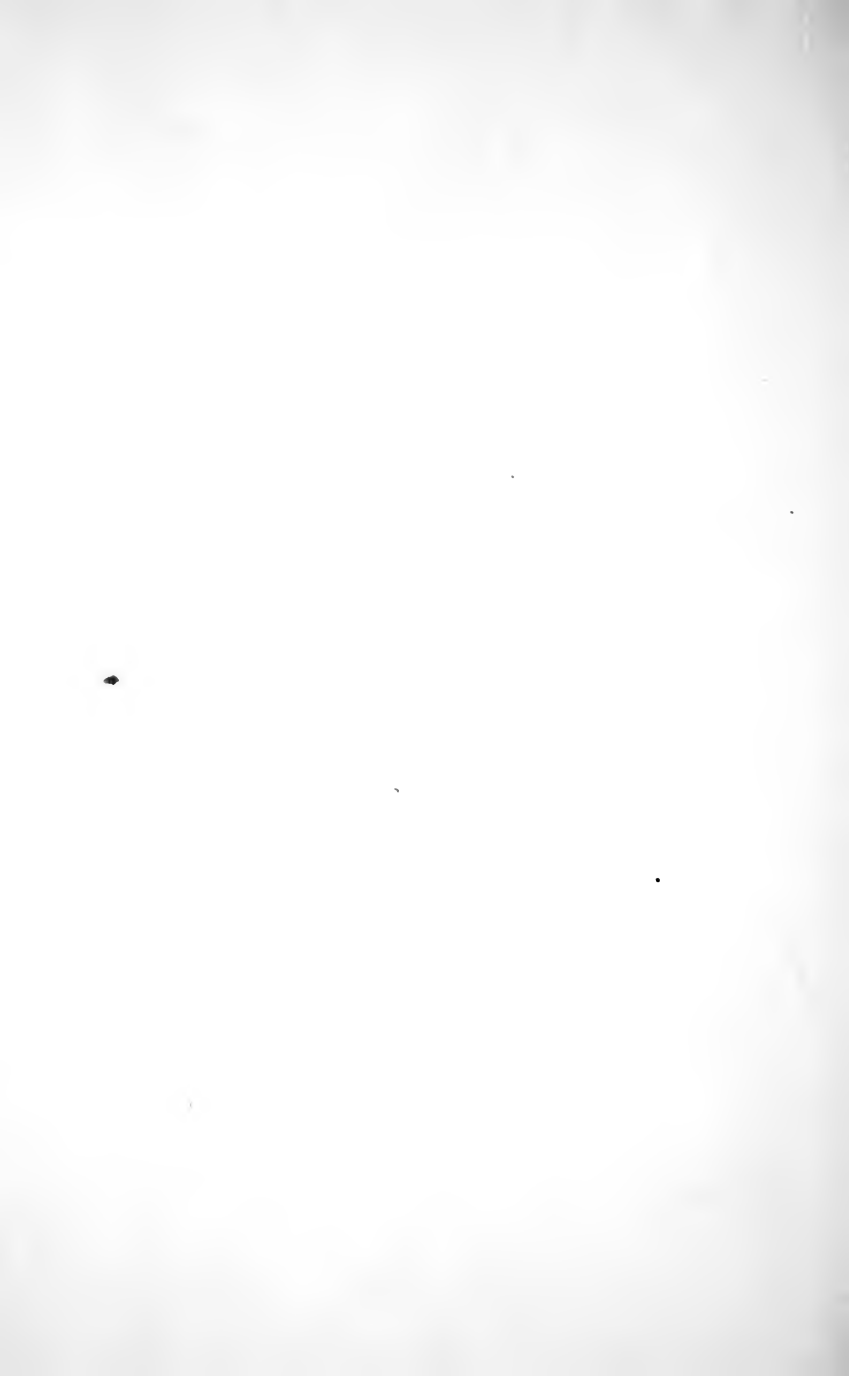
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E S S A Y S

L I T E R A R Y

A N D

M I S C E L L A N E O U S.

B Y

J. AIKIN, M. D.

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L O N D O N :

P R I N T E D F O R J. J O H N S O N A N D C O . , S T . P A U L ' S  
C H U R C H Y A R D .

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1811.



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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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OF the pieces composing this Volume, draughts have appeared at different times in two periodical works in which the Author was engaged. In presenting them collectively to the Public, they have not only been carefully revised, and in some instances new modelled, but additions have been made, by which the two most considerable, in particular, have received an enlargement of nearly one half. Those essays, likewise, were before, on account of their length, unavoidably deprived of the advantage of being viewed in a connected state, and with reference to the plans on which they were formed. It is hoped, therefore, that such readers as may have bestowed

stowed any approbation on the papers of this Miscellany at their first appearance, will not be displeased with the opportunity of re-perusing them detached from other matter, and with all the improvements that the Writer's deliberate consideration of their subjects could suggest. To those who will read them as novelties, they are offered with the deference due to public opinion from one, who, having always freely exercised for himself the right of critical judgement, is fully prepared to acquiesce in the exertion of the same right by others.

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ON

**SIMILES IN POETRY;**

WITH A PARTICULAR VIEW TO THOSE OF

**THE PRINCIPAL EPIC WRITERS.**

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THE purposes for which similes are employed may be referred to the two general heads of illustration and embellishment. Illustrative similes chiefly occur in scientific and argumentative works, in which they are often highly useful in elucidating by resemblance to things well known, other things which the reader's mind is not yet prepared to comprehend. It must, however, be acknowledged that this mode of illustration has often led to erroneous views and sophistical conclusions. Things like, are also things different; and inferences are often drawn from the likeness, without a due

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consideration of the difference. The similitude, moreover, is sometimes merely external and superficial, deluding the understanding by a semblance of truth totally void of reality, and making it seem to comprehend, by means of a symbol, what in itself is incomprehensible. It would be easy to adduce from philosophy and theology examples of this abuse of similes.

But for the poet's use, simile is to be regarded as almost entirely an ornamental addition. With illustration, properly so called, he has little to do; for the ideas and images that poetry presents should be readily conceivable, and want no aid of more familiar objects to bring them clearly before the mind. It is true, where the poet lays his scene beyond the bounds of nature and reality, and attempts to create a new world and new beings, he is under the necessity of borrowing images from things known; but this is not properly illustration; and the reader is only led to substitute something of which he *can* form a conception, to something of which he *cannot*.

Milton compares his angels to men, because it was necessary to suggest to the reader's imagination some idea of their persons, and

and he could give no other so suitable to their dignity; but he has not thereby illustrated their real form or nature.

Considering, then, all similes in poetry as accessories, the purpose of which is to add to that pleasure which is the ultimate object of the poetic art, they may be viewed as producing this effect either by deepening and enforcing the impression made by the original image; by exciting an agreeable surprise from the suggestion of an unexpected resemblance; or simply by a variation of scenery which breaks the monotony of a continued narrative.

With respect to the first of these intentions, it is not necessary, as some critics seem to have imagined, that the object brought in parallel should always be something greater of the same kind than that to which it is compared; for this rule would obviously exclude the greatest from any comparison at all. It is enough that the accessory object should coincide with the principal in that point of action or character which it is brought to exemplify; in which case, the more common and familiar it is to the imagination, the more effectually it may answer the end of impressing the

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mind

mind by an accumulation of similar ideas. Thus when, in the *Eneid*, the Tyrians busily occupied in building their city are resembled to a hive of bees at work on a summer's day, the leading images of *number* and *industry* are not in the least deteriorated by being transferred from men to insects; but are rather enhanced by the reference to a scene of which every one has a clear and lively conception. It is true, there are some parallels of this kind which, through an unhappy association of mean or ludicrous ideas, are apt to throw a ridicule upon the primary object; and which a cultivated taste will therefore avoid. Thus, no modern poet would choose to copy the simile in the *Odyssey* where Ulysses, tossing restless in his bed, is compared to a hungry man turning a tripe on the coals for his supper; or that in the *Iliad*, in which the Greeks and Trojans contending for the body of Patroclus, and pulling it in opposite directions, are likened to curriers stretching a hide. The point of resemblance is indeed sufficiently exact; but embellishment, not illustration, being the true purpose of a poetic simile, an image that derogates from beauty or grandeur is not excused by its similitude. It is  
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in burlesque only that such comparisons have an appropriate place: and in that species of fiction their effect is often singularly happy.

The pleasure arising from unexpected resemblance is of a nature entirely different from that afforded by the class of similes above mentioned; and is referable to those emotions which we experience when remote and dissimilar ideas are brought together by means of some fanciful association, the effecting of which is the peculiar office of the faculty called wit. In the similes of this class, the more unlike in nature are the two objects which are placed in comparison, the more perfectly is the end attained of producing surprise, and amusing the fancy by the reciprocation of contrast and resemblance. Thus, when the two ideas of pleasure and quicksilver are presented together to the mind, the first perception is solely that of their diversity. But when Dr. Young has pointed out the circumstances of resemblance in their being each glittering, slippery, eluding the grasp, and, when possessed, leaving a poison in the veins, the unforeseen similarity in two things so radically different strikes us as a discovery; and we at least

least admire the ingenuity of the author, if no higher effect be produced.

Pleasures are few, and fewer we enjoy ;  
 Pleasure, like quicksilver, is bright and coy ;  
 We strive to grasp it with our utmost skill,  
 Still it eludes us, and it glitters still :  
 If seiz'd at last, compute your mighty gains ;  
 What is it, but rank poison in your veins ?

*Satire v.*

There is danger, however, lest in pursuing uncommon parallels, the fancy should stray to whimsical and far-fetched thoughts, which border on the ludicrous. Thus the same writer compares one who subsists upon trifling empty joys, to a cat in an air-pump. And Cowley justly stigmatizes, as a species of false wit, the practice so common in his age (and indeed so frequently exemplified in his own Works) of "obtruding on all things some odd similitude." Yet some degree of invention in a simile, so as to remove it from what is perfectly obvious, is expected; and it is a received rule in the formation of this figure, that the principal and the accessory image should not be too like. They should not, for example, be only variations of the same fundamental circumstance; or identical in the action, and only different in the agent: as where Tasso, who

who is often faulty in this point, illustrates the expressions of delight exhibited by the christian army when a long drought was terminated by a pouring rain, to the sporting of ducks in a shower.

It must, however, be acknowledged that Homer, and the other poets of an early period, have seldom been at the trouble to search far for objects of similitude, but have usually contented themselves with the first that occurred. But they, and especially the Grecian bard, have given full scope to what I consider as the third purpose of simile,—that of producing variety in their descriptions. Homer, habituated to observe nature with a correct eye, and with a mind alive to every thing striking and sublime in its scenery, has manifestly made it a leading object to diversify his narrative with numerous pictures drawn from the life, which might give pleasure independently of any application to the topic suggesting them. In fact, his merit as a painter from nature is perhaps that in which he stands most distinguished from all other poets. In variety, accuracy, and force, the descriptions in his similes greatly surpass those of any of his successors and imitators; and they  
form

form a gallery of delineations which the student of poetry cannot survey with too much attention. In many of these pieces the point of resemblance is lightly touched; and the poet, unshackled by the supposed necessity of keeping in view a constant parallel between the primary and the accessory image, runs out into a detail of circumstances, in the latter, wholly alien from the occasion on which it was introduced. If this be a deviation from the perfection of simile, which seems to require both copiousness and exactness of parallelism, it has yet been productive of so many grand and impressive sketches in Homer's works, that no true lover of poetry or of nature can wish that a premature correctness of taste had restrained him in his effusions. And though some French critics have endeavoured to throw ridicule upon what they have named his *long-tailed similes*, yet the imitation of them by Milton, the most truly Homeric of his epic successors, may be esteemed a weighty decision in their favour. One point of congruity, however, may properly be required in these digressive descriptions—that if they have no direct affinity with the scene that suggested them, they at least should harmonize with it in general

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ral effect, and not give rise to discordant emotions. For although variety be a principal object in these ornamental additions, it is variety of imagery rather than of sentiment: change in the former may agreeably amuse the imagination, while interruption in the latter would unpleasantly divert the current of the feelings.

But as the justness of all rules of art is only to be appretiated by examples of their actual application, I shall now proceed to what I intend for the principal matter of this paper, namely, a critical examination of the similes presented in the works of Homer, the great fountain of poetical imagery in general, and especially of such as belongs to this head; compared with those of Virgil, who is in general almost his translator in these figures; and of Milton, sometimes his imitator, but never without originality. To these I shall occasionally add such examples from other poets, principally epic, as are suggested by the particular subject, and may contribute either to entertainment or illustration. The similes will be arranged in classes according to the nature of the objects from which they are taken.

## I.

## FROM THE HEAVENLY BODIES.

It must appear extraordinary that amidst the striking objects of creation which caught the eye of Homer, the most splendid of all, the *Sun*, should be so little applied by him to poetical use. I can find but one instance in which this luminary is made, in its proper character, a subject of comparison by him; and this is comprised in a single line. Achilles, resplendent in arms, is said to be "like the Sun in its ascension.\*" *Il.* xix. 398.

Unaided by the example of Homer, it would seem that the genius of Virgil was unequal to the management of so grand an object; but our Milton has ventured to introduce it  
upon

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\* In all the quotations from Homer, the Greek original will only be referred to, and the sense will be given in an English translation. As accuracy appeared essential for the purpose of criticism and comparison, it was soon found that Pope's translation, however elegant in versification, and often beautiful in language, would not answer the purpose; and Cowper's not having been published when this paper was begun, I was induced to attempt one of my own of the cited passages, in blank verse, as faithful as possible to the original. But it would be equally an offence against

upon his canvass, not indeed in meridian splendour, but with its glory dimmed and obscured, so as to be a fit parallel to an angelic being in a state of degradation.

. . . . . As when the Sun new risen  
Looks through the horizontal misty air  
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon  
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes monarchs; darken'd so, yet shone  
Above them all, th' Archangel.

*Par. L. i. 594.*

This simile is not properly a comparison between two things, but the imaging of an idea of the fancy by one of the memory; and is therefore an example of that *illustrative* use of this figure which, though rare in poetry, must occur when the subject of description is something beyond this visible and material world. The *Paradise Lost* abounds with such similitudes, applied to the superhuman per-

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taste and modesty not to prefer the admirable versions of that great poet whenever, as is commonly the case, they unite the requisite exactness with their characteristic spirit. When they have seemed to me to fail in that point, I have ventured to substitute my own. To various other quoted passages, likewise, of which I could either meet with no translation, or none sufficiently exact, I have annexed versions composed upon a similar plan. All those which I have borrowed are marked with the writer's name.

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sonages who are the principal actors in the piece; and this application has been a cause of the peculiar grandeur of his similes, the objects of comparison being naturally derived from the sublimest scenes of creation.

*Sun-shine*, though not the sun himself, has afforded an object of resemblance both to Homer and Milton. When Patroclus has repelled the hostile fire from the Grecian ship, the interval of returning repose and safety to the Greeks is represented in the following simile :

As when the king of lightnings, Jove, dispells  
From some huge eminence a gloomy cloud,  
The groves, the mountain-tops, the headland heights  
Shine all, illumined from the boundless heav'n ;  
So, when the Greeks had saved the ships from fire,  
Some ease they found.

*Il. xvi. 297. Cowper.*

The similitude here consists in the *effects* of the two circumstances on the mind, not in the circumstances themselves, in which there is rather an opposition ; fire being extinguished in one case, and light restored in the other : but the result of both is a gleam of returning cheerfulness. Pope, indeed, in contradiction to all the commentators, and to the poet's own explanation of his simile, supposes the likeness to consist solely in sensible appearances ;  
and

and that the clearing away of the smoke after the extinction of the fire, is meant to be paralleled to the dispersion of the cloud; but this explanation seems forced and unfounded. It may be added, that in the Hebrew poetry, *light* and *joy* are used almost synonymously; and that there are examples of the same metaphor in the language of Homer himself.

Milton, in imitating the descriptive part of this simile, has applied it to the same purpose. After Satan has taken upon himself the toil and hazard of the exploratory voyage which was to liberate the diabolic host from their infernal prison, their returning hope and joy are painted in this beautiful comparison :

As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds  
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread  
Heav'n's cheerful face, the louring element  
Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape snow or shower;  
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet  
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,  
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds  
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.

*Par. L. ii. 488.*

The fourth great epic poet, Tasso, will supply us with another simile from the sun and its light, applied, according to the gallantry of his age, to the purpose of complimenting female

male beauty. It is introduced in the enchanting description of Armida.

D'auro hà la chioma, ed hor dal bianco velo  
 Traluce involta, hor discoperta appare.  
 Così qual' hor si rasserena il cielo,  
 Hor da candida nube il Sol traspare,  
 Hor de la nube uscendo, i raggi intorno  
 Più chiari spiega, e ne raddoppia il giorno.

*Ger. Lib. iv. st. 29.*

Now through her snowy veil, half hid from sight,  
 Her golden locks diffuse a doubtful light ;  
 And now, unveil'd, in open view they show'd :  
 So Phœbus glimmers through a fleecy cloud,  
 So from the cloud again redeems his ray,  
 And sheds new glories on the face of day.

*Hoole.*

The *Moon* is introduced in simile, both by Homer and Milton, and is compared by both to the same object ; but what the Grecian bard has only just touched upon, is by our countryman wrought into a noble picture. Of Achilles it is said,

And next he rear'd his ample, ponderous shield,  
 Whence beam'd afar a splendour, like the Moon's.

*Il. xix. 373.*

This image, transferred to the shield of Satan, is thus expanded :

..... his ponderous shield,  
 Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,

Behind

Behind him cast ; the broad circumference  
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose orb  
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views  
At evening, from the top of Fesole,  
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,  
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.

*Par. L. i. 286.*

This is one of the instances alluded to, in which Milton imitates the manner of Homer in lengthening out a simile beyond the point of resemblance, for the mere purpose of forming a picture. The figure of the Tuscan artist viewing the moon through his telescope, and the fancied rivers and mountains in its *spotty* surface, have no parallel in Satan or his shield, but serve to give a picturesque effect to the introduction of that luminary, and to amuse the mind by variety. Whether this pleasure be not too dearly purchased when, as in the present case, the accessory circumstances lead the imagination into a totally different track from that it was pursuing, every reader must determine for himself. Were I to speak from my own experience, I should say, that the versatility of the human mind is such as to enable it to make short excursions from one object to another, and back again, without confusion, and with little interruption  
to

to the train of ideas belonging to a regular narrative.

The moon is a conspicuous object in a simile of Homer's which has been greatly and deservedly admired for its poetical beauties. It is introduced in a night-scene on the plain before Troy.

As when around the clear bright Moon, the stars  
Shine in full splendour, and the winds are hush'd,  
The groves, the mountain-tops, the headland-heights  
Stand all apparent, not a vapour streaks  
The boundless blue, but ether open'd wide  
All glitters, and the shepherd's heart is cheer'd ;  
So numerous seem'd those fires between the stream  
Of Xanthus, blazing, and the fleet of Greece,  
In prospect all of Troy.

*Il. viii. 551. Cowper.*

This is, indeed, an exquisite picture ; and it is obvious that to render it such was the poet's chief purpose ; for the point of resemblance is restricted to the single circumstance of the *number* of the Trojan fires, compared to that of the stars : and the majestic figure of the moon, the most distinguished object in the scene, together with the glorious diffusion of light from the heavens, and the rejoicing shepherd, has no parallel in the real scene.

If we may digress to a poet of a different  
class,



class, but one who certainly possesses much of the epic force and dignity, we shall find in Spenser a simile in which the moon bursting from a cloud is painted with suitable accompaniments as a parallel to the fair and martial Britomart when she lifts up her visor and displays her countenance.

As when fair Cynthia in darksome night  
Is in a noyous cloud enveloped,  
Where she may find the substance thin and light,  
Breaks forth her silver beams, and her bright head  
Discovers to the world discomfited ;  
Of the poor traveller that went astray  
With thousand blessings she is heried :  
Such was the beauty and the shining ray  
With which fair Britomart gave light unto the day.

*F. Q. b. iii. c. i. 43.*

*Stars* are frequent objects of comparison in the three great epic poems, as images both of beauty and of terror. The glitter of arms is obviously resembled to the sparkling of a star. Thus Homer says of Diomed,

..... His helmed head  
She circled, and his shield, with living fires,  
Bright as, when brightest, the autumnal Star  
In ocean laved, and recent from the deep :

*Il. v. 4. Cowper.*

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and

and of the spear of Achilles ;

As in the darksome night, amidst the Stars  
Fair Hesper shines, the fairest light of heav'n,  
So sparkled the keen point.

*Il.* xxii. 317.

Astyanax is compared to a star for his beauty (*Il.* vi. 401) ; a similitude which Virgil finely heightens and expands, in applying it to the son of Evander :

..... Ipse agmine Pallas  
In medio, chlamyde et pictis conspectus in armis :  
Qualis ubi Oceani perfusus Lucifer unda,  
Quem Venus ante alios astrorum diligit ignes,  
Extulit os sacrum cœlo, tenebrasque resolvit.

*Æn.* viii. 587.

Young Pallas shone conspicuous o'er the rest,  
Gilded his arms, embroider'd was his vest :  
So from the seas exerts his radiant head  
The Star, by whom the lights of heav'n are led ;  
Shakes from his rosy locks the pearly dew,  
Dispels the darkness, and the day renews.

*Dryden.*

The circumstance of the planet's lifting his head above the waves, and dispelling the darkness, is imagined and expressed with the elegance and dignity peculiar to this poet. The translation, though by no means correct, is highly beautiful in point of language.

Statius

Statius gives a manifest imitation of this simile, but so varied in its circumstances as to form a new and very beautiful picture. It is introduced on occasion of a foot-race, in which, while all the competitors are shining with the oil applied to their naked limbs, one is peculiarly distinguished by the beauty of his person:

Sic ubi tranquillo pellucet sidera ponto,  
Vibraturque fretis cœli stellantis imago,  
Omnia clara nitent, sed clarior omnia supra  
Hesperus exercet radios, quantusque per altum  
Æthera, cæruleis tantum monstratur in undis.

*Theb.* vi. 578.

Thus, on the bosom of the tranquil main,  
When every Star in quivering lustre shines,  
And heaven adorns the deep; though all are bright,  
Fair Hesper darts the brightest ray; nor less  
Than in the vaulted sky, transcendent glows  
On the smooth surface of the azure waves.

Brightness, but of a terrific and ominous kind, is the attribute of the star to which Hector is compared in the *Iliad*, with the additional circumstance of its shining and disappearing by fits, as that warrior in his rapid motion showed himself in different parts of the line of battle.

As, bursting from the clouds, a star malign  
Now sparkles bright, anon in dusky clouds

Plunges obscur'd ; so, marshalling his host,  
 Now in the van, now in the distant rear,  
 The hero flames.

*Il. xi. 62.*

Cowper has, I think, unadvisedly called this "pernicious star," a *comet*; for in the following simile Homer distinguishes by name a star of baleful influence, and gives a reason why it is regarded as such. The subject of comparison is Achilles, in all his terrors, pursuing the Trojans.

Glitt'ring he scour'd the plain : as that bright star,  
 Orion's Dog by name, in autumn shines  
 Through the dark night, and shoots his vivid rays,  
 Refulgent 'mid the numerous lights of heav'n.  
 Brightest he shines, but baleful is his sway,  
 To wretched mortals bearing hot disease.

*Il. xxii. 26.*

Virgil, in applying the same simile to Æneas, has heightened the poetical expression, but has, perhaps, somewhat impaired the effect by dividing the attention between two objects of similitude, a comet, and the Dog-star.

Ardet apex capiti, cristisque a vertice flamma  
 Funditur, et vastos umbo vomit aureus ignes :  
 Haud secus ac liquida si quando nocte cometæ  
 Sanguinei lugubre rubent ; aut Sirius ardor :  
 Ille sitim morbosque ferens mortalibus agris  
 Nascitur, et lævo contristat lumine cælum :

*Æn. x. 278.*

The

The Latians saw from far, with dazzled eyes,  
The radiant crest that seem'd in flames to rise,  
And dart diffusive fires around the field,  
And the keen glittering of the golden shield.  
Thus threatening comets, when by night they rise,  
Shoot sanguine streams, and sadden all the skies :  
So Sirius flashing forth sinister lights,  
Pale human kind with plagues, and with dry famine frights.

*Dryden.*

The first two lines in this passage are an imitation of Homer's description, above quoted, of the armour of Diomed. In the subsequent lines, the expression "lugubre rubent" applied to comets, and the effect attributed to Sirius of "saddening the sky with malignant light," are fine strokes of poetical imagery.

In sublimity of conception, Milton, adopting this simile, has surpassed both his originals ; as, indeed, the transcendent grandeur of the personages in his fable naturally gave scope to all the lofty imagery with which his mind was stored. He confines his comparison to the comet; which, though not philosophically considered as the cause or precursor of those evils that superstition has connected with its appearance, is sufficiently associated with them in popular opinion to justify a poet in assuming the supposition as fact.

..... On

..... On th' other side,  
 Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood  
 Unterrified, and like a Comet burn'd,  
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge  
 In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair  
 Shakes pestilence and war.

*Par. L. ii. 1708.*

What could be imagined more terribly sublime and appropriate as an object of similitude to the highest of evil beings, than the figure of a comet blazing through the space of a vast constellation, and scattering plagues from his train?

The fancied form of Orion in the heavens has afforded Virgil a simile of extraordinary grandeur, but somewhat hyperbolical as applied to one who is only a second-rate hero in his poem.

At vero ingentem quatiens Mezentius hastam  
 Turbidus ingreditur campo : quam magnus Orion,  
 Cum pedes incedit medii per maxima Nerei  
 Stagna, viam scindens, humero supereminet undas.

*Æn. x. 763.*

Once more the proud Mezentius with disdain  
 Brandish'd his spear, and rush'd into the plain ;  
 Where tow'ring in the midmost ranks he stood,  
 Like tall Orion stalking o'er the flood ;  
 When with his brawny breast he cuts the waves,  
 His shoulder scarce the topmost billow laves.

*Dryden.*

Milton

Milton has a second time introduced the celestial bodies as the only adequate objects of comparison to his angelic leaders. Michael and Satan meet in a conflict which is represented to the imagination by the following simile:

..... such as, to set forth  
Great things by small, if, Nature's concord broke,  
Among the constellations war were sprung !  
Two Planets, rushing with aspect malign  
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky  
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.

*Par. L. vi. 310.*

Though the poet endeavours to aggrandize the reader's conception of his personages by warning him that the comparison is only of *small* things to *great*, yet this is a mere address to the understanding, for the fancy can scarcely embody any thing greater than the objects which he has selected for the similitude.

## II.

### FROM METEORS, LIGHTNING, RAYS OF LIGHT, AND CLOUDS.

The meteor commonly called a fire-ball is probably meant by Homer in the simile which he applies to the descent of Minerva between the Grecian and Trojan armies.

..... As

..... As a fiery globe  
 Design'd by Jove a portent in the eyes  
 Of mariners, or of some numerous host,  
 Glittering descends, and showering sparks around;  
 In semblance such she darted to the field,  
 And dropp'd between them.

*Il. iv. 75. Cowper.*

This is imitated, and, as usual, much heightened, by Milton in his description of Uriel's descent to earth.

Thither came Uriel, gliding through the ev'n  
 On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star  
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd  
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner  
 From what point of his compass to beware  
 Impetuous winds.

*Par. L. iv. 555.*

The latter lines are not a gratuitous addition to the simile, but refer to the purpose of Uriel's descent, which was to put Gabriel on his guard against the machinations of Satan.

The same poet employs the image of a meteor in his magnificent description of the great Satanic standard.

..... forthwith from the glitt'ring staff unfurl'd  
 Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advanc'd,  
 Shone like a Meteor, streaming to the wind.\*

*Par. L. i. 535.*

---

\* This is copied by Gray, and by a ludicrous exaggeration applied to the hair and beard of his Welsh Bard.

That



That singular light, the *Ignis fatuus*, has afforded Milton a subject for one of his highest-wrought similes.

..... As when a wand'ring fire  
 Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night  
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,  
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,  
 Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,  
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light,  
 Misleads th' amaz'd night-wand'rer from his way  
 To bogs and mires, and oft through pond and pool,  
 There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far;  
 So glister'd the dire snake. *Par. L. ix. 634.*

This comparison exhibits, in an eminent degree, that union of moral with natural resemblance in which the perfection of this figure consists. The *attendant evil Spirit*, the *delusive light misleading the wanderer to danger and destruction, far from succour*, have as much reference to the *character and situation* of the Serpent and Eve, as the *glittering light* of the *dancing meteor* has to the *shining skin* of the *gliding snake*.

That striking meteorous phenomenon, the *Aurora borealis*, could have escaped the notice of the ancient poets only from its great infrequency in their ages or countries. Virgil, indeed, alludes to it in his account of the  
 prodigies

prodigies at the death of Cæsar ; but an appearance so rare as to be a prodigy could scarcely be introduced in a simile. Even Milton speaks of it as portentous, where he describes it as an object of similitude to the martial exercises of the fallen angels :

As when to warn proud cities, war appears  
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush  
To battle in the clouds ; before each van  
Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears  
Till thickest legions close ; with feats of arms  
From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.

*Par. L. ii. 533.*

This passage is remarkable for containing a simile within a simile ; for the supposed exercises of the Satanic warriors are not directly compared to the coruscations of the northern lights, but to what those lights are fancied to resemble.

Among the images of terror and sublimity offered by nature to the mind of the poet, it was impossible that the awful occurrence of *Thunder* and *Lightning* could be overlooked, in which, solemnity of sound, brilliancy of appearance, rapidity of motion, and violence of action, all conspire to impress the imagination. One of the earliest similes in Homer is a noble  
one

one derived from this source. After his minute catalogue of the Grecian army, the effect of which is to inspire a high idea of its force, he sustains the images of power and number by thus describing their march to the enemy :

Fire seem'd to scorch the plain where'er they trod,  
And the earth groan'd, as when the lightnings hurl'd  
By angry Jove in Arimi descend  
On Typhon's rumour'd bed, and lash the ground.

*Il. ii. 781. Cowper.*

Milton, in like manner, compares the sound of a great assembly to that of distant thunder. When the council of Pandemonium broke up,

Their rising all at once was as the sound  
Of thunder heard remote.

*Par. L. ii. 476.*

The velocity and brilliancy of lightning are the circumstances of resemblance which Homer applies to Idomeneus rushing to battle.

(He) Set forth like lightning which Saturnian Jove  
From bright Olympus shakes into the air,  
Dazzling all eyes ; a sign to men below :  
So beam'd the hero's armour as he ran.

*Il. xiii. 242. Cowper.*

There are two similes in Homer and Virgil in which affections of the mind are compared to the flashing of lightning. By the first poet,  
the

the agitation of Agamemnon during the night subsequent to the failure of his endeavours to appease the resentment of Achilles, is thus depicted :

As when the spouse of beauteous Juno darts  
His frequent fires, designing heaviest rain,  
Or hail, or snow that whitens all the fields,  
Or devastation of wide-throated war :  
So frequent from his inmost bosom groan'd  
The son of Atreus, trembling at his heart.

*Il. x. 5. Cowper.*

The resemblance here, as marked by the author, is limited to the single circumstance of *frequent repetition* ; but it is probable that the penetrating flashes of uneasy thought found a parallel in his mind in gleams of lightning ; and also, the impending evils consequent on the anger of Achilles, in the calamities of which such lightning is the supposed sign or precursor. In our progress we shall meet with a variety of instances in which this poet plainly intends points of similitude which he neglects directly to announce.

The other simile referred to is in that voluptuous passage of the Eneid, where Venus exerts her powers of allurements upon Vulcan, in order to procure from him a suit of celestial  
armour

armour for her son. The effects are thus represented :

..... ille repente  
 Accipit solitam flammam : notusque medullas  
 Intravit calor, et labefacta per ossa cucurrit :  
 Haud secus atque olim tonitru cum rupta corusco  
 Ignea rima micans percurrit lumine nimbos.

*Æn.* viii. 388.

At once he feels the usual flame ; the heat  
 His marrow fires, and runs through all his bones :  
 As when a fiery chink, from thunder burst,  
 Darts cross the clouds, in quiv'ring light display'd.

Both Dryden's and Pitt's version of these lines are very defective, as they confine the resemblance to the circumstance of *swiftness of motion* ; whereas Virgil evidently draws a parallel between the metaphorical fire of love, and the actual fire in a flash of lightning.

Lucan has a noted simile in which lightning, in the destructive form usually called a thunderbolt, is made the object of comparison to the character of Julius Cæsar, who is previously drawn by the poet with the moral features of restless activity, and irresistible vigour, urging him on to his objects of passion and ambition with the ruin of all that stands in his way. Whether or not this portrait be chargeable with party exaggeration, is not here the question ;

question; but taking it is as represented, the similitude is ingeniously conceived, and the description it suggests is highly poetical.

Qualiter expressum ventis per-nubila fulmen  
 Ætheris impulsu sonitu, mundique fragore  
 Emicuit, rupitque diem, populosque paventes  
 Terruit, obliqua præstringens lumina flamma :  
 In sua templa furit ; nullaue exire vetante  
 Materia, magnamque cadens, magnamque revertens  
 Dat stragem late, sparsosque recolligit ignes.

*Phars. i. 151.*

Such, while earth trembles, and heav'n thunders loud,  
 Darts the swift lightning from the rending cloud ;  
 Fierce through the day it breaks, and in its flight  
 The dreadful blast confounds the gazer's sight ;  
 Resistless in its course delights to rove,  
 And cleaves the temples of its master Jove :  
 Alike where'er it passes or returns  
 With equal rage the fell destroyer burns ;  
 Then with a whirl full in its strength retires,  
 And recollects the force of all its scatter'd fires.

*Rowe.*

Besides the general parallel, the circumstance of "raging against its own temples" manifestly alludes to the hostility exercised by Cæsar against his own country.

I shall make a further excursion to introduce what appears to me a very sublime as well as ingenious simile belonging to this head, presented

sented by the fertile fancy of Ariosto. Sacripante has been unexpectedly thrown to the ground with his steed by an unknown knight, who passes on and leaves him to rise at his leisure :

Quale stordito e stupido aratore  
Poich' è passato il fulmine, si leva  
Di là, dove l'altissimo fragore  
Presso agli uccisi buoi steso l'aveva ;  
Che mira senza fronde, e senza onore  
Il pin, che di lontan veder soleva :  
Tal si levò il Pagano.

*Orl. Fur.* canto i. 65.

As when, the thunder past, in stupid trance  
A peasant slowly rises, whom the bolt,  
Darted with loudest crash, had stretch'd on earth  
Beside his slaughter'd steers ; and views amaz'd,  
Leafless and blasted, all its honours shorn,  
The distant pine ; so rose th' astonish'd chief.

Although the peasant himself is here the declared object of comparison, yet the thunder-stroke is the circumstance on which the similitude depends, and it has a direct parallel in the shock which overthrew the cavalier.

*Light* glancing from the surface of water is compared by Virgil to the wavering thoughts which occupied the breast of Æneas when agitated by various cares. This simile, which

is

is of the *ingenious* class, is borrowed from Apollonius Rhodius, and partakes of the character of the Alexandrian school: the Roman, however, has wrought it with his own beauty of language.

. . . . .animum nunc huc celerem, nunc dividit illuc,  
In partesque rapit varias, perque omnia versat.  
Sicut aquæ tremulum labris uti lumen ahenis  
Sole repperçussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,  
Omnia pervolitat late loca, jamque sub auras  
Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti.

*Æn. viii. 22.*

A thousand thoughts his wavering soul divide  
That turns each way, and points to every side.  
So from a brazen vase the trembling stream  
Reflects the lunar or the solar beam :  
Swift and elusive of the dazzled eyes  
From wall to wall the dancing glory flies ;  
Thence to the ceiling shoot the glancing rays,  
And o'er the roof the quiv'ring splendour plays.

*Pitt.*

It may perhaps be objected to this simile that it is too gay for the occasion ; otherwise, the quick glances of thought are well paralleled by the play of reflected light.

An ingenious comparison between Light and Thought is also given by Tasso, who has taken the hint from Petrarch. It is in the sequel of the charming description of Armida, from which



which a clause has already been quoted. The artful fair in her dress discloses just enough to allure the imagination to wander further.

Come per acqua, ò per cristallo intero  
 Trapassa il raggio, e no'l divide, ò parte ;  
 Per entro il chiuso manto osa il pensiero  
 Sì penetrar ne la vietata parte.

*Ger. Lib. iv. 32.*

As through the limpid stream or crystal bright  
 The rays of Phœbus dart their piercing light ;  
 So through her vesture Fancy dares to glide,  
 And views what modesty would seem to hide.

*Hoole.*

*Clouds* are striking objects, not only in their visible appearance, but as being the harbingers of grand and terrific effects. They are therefore well adapted for images of comparison in the sublimer scenes of epic poetry ; and the father of this species of composition has left some noble specimens of their use to the admiration and imitation of his successors. The first example that I shall select bears the character of tranquil majesty.

.....like clouds by Jove amass'd  
 On some huge mountain's summit, while the force  
 Of Boreas sleeps, with all the whistling winds  
 That chase the gloomy vapours when they blow :

So stood the Grecians, waiting the approach  
Of Ilium's pow'rs, and neither fled nor fear'd.

*Il. v. 522. Cowper.*

In the following passage, the terrific prevails; and there is, perhaps, no simile in Homer, in which a comparative scene is either more justly painted, or more exactly adapted. Agamemnon, reviewing his troops, comes to the battalion of the Ajaxes, whom he finds arming, and followed by a "cloud of infantry," as he figuratively expresses it. This figure he immediately expands into a most animated landscape.

As when the goat-herd from a rocky point  
Sees rolling o'er the deep and wasted on  
By western gales a cloud, that, as it comes,  
In distant prospect view'd, pitch-black appears,  
And brings worst weather, lightning, storm and rain,  
He, shudd'ring, drives his flock into a cave;  
So moved the gloomy phalanx, rough with spears,  
And dense with shields of youthful warriors bold,  
Close-following either Ajax to the fight.

*Il. iv. 275. Cowper.*

Virgil has closely imitated this simile, though with some improvements and some omissions.

Qualis ubi ad terras abrupto sidere nimbus  
It mare per medium; miseris, heu! præscia longe  
Horrescunt corda agricolis: dabit ille ruinas  
Arboribus, stragemque satis; ruet omnia late:  
Antevolant, sonitumque ferunt ad litora venti:

*Talis*

Talis in adversos ductor Rhœtēus hostes  
 Agmen agit: densi cuneis se quisque coactis  
 Agglomerant. *Æn. xii. 451.*

As when some tempest o'er mid ocean roars,  
 And wing'd with whirlwinds gathers to the shores;  
 With boding hearts, the peasants hear from far  
 The sullen murmurs of the distant war;  
 Foresee the harvest levell'd to the ground,  
 And all the forests spread in ruins round,  
 Swift to the land the hollow grumbling wind  
 Flies, and proclaims the furious storm behind:  
 So swift, so furious great Æneas flew,  
 And led against the foes the martial crew.  
 The thick'ning squadrons, wedg'd in close array,  
 In one black body win their desperate way. *Pitt.*

The sudden change of person (unmarked in the translation) from the poet to the affrighted spectator, who exclaims "dabit ille ruinas—ruet omnia late," adds great spirit to the piece; and the circumstance of the winds, like harbingers, preceding the tempest, is a happy addition. At the same time we want the "pitchy darkness," and the significant action of the shepherd hurrying his flock under shelter, presented in the Greek picture.

Milton, in a simile derived from the same natural objects, has as much surpassed the two preceding poets in sublimity of conception, as the actors in his fable are superior in greatness

to theirs. Satan and Death, those mighty and terrible combatants, preparing to engage, are thus imaged :

..... such a frown  
 Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds  
 With heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on  
 Over the Caspian, then stand front to front  
 Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow  
 To join their dark encounter in mid air.

*Par. L. ii. 714.*

As it was necessary for the comparison that the clouds should move in opposite directions, he has properly made them thunder clouds, in which that circumstance is common ; besides that the “ artillery ” with which they are fraught renders them a more appropriate image of battle. It may be further observed, that in the enunciation of this simile, Milton has adopted the Homeric manner of pointing it to a single circumstance of resemblance, that of their *menacing looks* to the *blackness* of clouds, when he intended the whole description as a parallel.

### III.

#### FROM WIND, STORM, AND TEMPEST.

These phenomena of nature, the sensible  
 effects

effects of which are more striking and terrible, considering their frequency, than those of any other, have afforded much matter of description to poets, both directly, and in the way of simile.

Of *Wind*, the awful *sound* is one of the most obvious circumstances adapted to poetical application. Homer has joined it with the roaring of waves, and the rattling of fire, as a comparison for the noise and tumult of battle.

..... Not so the billows roar  
 The shores among, when Boreas' roughest blast  
 Sweeps landward from the main the swelling surge ;  
 Not so, devouring fire among the trees  
 That clothe the mountains when the sheeted flames  
 Ascending wrap the forest in a blaze ;  
 Nor howl the winds through leafy boughs of oaks  
 Uprgrown aloft (though loudest there they rave) ;  
 With sounds so awful as were heard of Greeks  
 And Trojans shouting when the clash began.

*Il. xiv. 394. Cowper.*

The expressive and almost inimitable sonorousness of the Greek language is singularly striking in the original of these lines.

Virgil has copied the images, but has judiciously lowered the expression, where he applies them in comparison to the hum of bees within their hive.

Tum

Tum sonus auditur gravior, tractimque susurrant ;  
 Frigidus ut quondam sylvis immurmurat Auster ;  
 Ut mare sollicitum stridet refluentibus undis ;  
 Æstuat ut clausis rapidus fornacibus ignis.

*Georg. iv. 260.*

'Tis then in hoarser tones their hums resound,  
 Like hollow winds the rustling forest round ;  
 Or billows breaking on a distant shore ;  
 Or flames in furnaces that inly roar.

*Pitt.*

Dryden, in his version of this passage, seems to have understood by "sonus gravior," a lower sound than usual ; and has, accordingly, with wonderful dexterity accommodated his expressions to this idea. The lines are worth quoting ; though it will appear that he has entirely misinterpreted the "mare sollicitum stridet," and the "rapidus ignis æstuat," of the original.

Soft whispers then and broken sounds are heard ;  
 As when the woods by gentle winds are stirr'd ;  
 Such stifled noise as the close furnace hides ;  
 Or dying murmurs of departing tides.

The Roman poet makes a more dignified use of the murmuring noise of wind, where he compares to it the assenting and dissenting sound uttered by the assembly of the Gods after the speech of Juno.

.....cunctique

.....cunctique fremebant  
 Cœlicolæ assensu vario : ceu flamina prima  
 Cum deprensa fremunt silvis, et cæca volutant  
 Murmura, venturos nautis prodentia ventos.

*Æn.* x. 96.

.....the Gods divide,  
 And in mixt murmurs vote on either side :  
 So, pent in woods, at first with sullen sound  
 The wind, low murmuring, fills the forest round ;  
 A dreadful signal to the naval train  
 Of the loud storms impending o'er the main.

*Pitt.*

Of the English translation here it may be remarked, that it has no authority from the original for representing this murmur in the woods as the forerunner of a *storm* at sea, but merely of a wind \*.

Our great countryman, who never takes a hint from another writer without such improvements as give him the merit of originality, has founded a beautiful passage upon the same similitude. It occurs at the conclusion of Mammon's harangue to the peers in Pandemonium.

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd  
 Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain

---

\* The spirit of exaggeration, characteristic of all second-rate translators, will be too apparent in every passage quoted from Pitt and Rowe.

The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long  
 Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
 Sea-faring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,  
 Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy bay  
 After the tempest.

*Par. L. ii. 284.*

This simile is truly Homeric, but in Homer's best manner. The scenery into which the description wanders is highly picturesque; and though digressive from the main point of the similitude, yet harmonizes with the sentiment excited by the preceding speech, which is that of repose from toil and danger: "his sentence pleas'd, advising peace."

The *violent action* of wind is associated with its sound, and produces effects well adapted to poetical simile. Thus Homer aptly compares the contest between the Greeks and Trojans for the body of Crebriones, to the conflict of two adverse winds rending a forest.

As when the East wind and the South contend  
 To shake some deep wood on the mountain's side,  
 Or beech, or ash, or rugged cornel old,  
 With stormy violence the mingled boughs  
 Smite and snap short each other, crashing loud,  
 So, Trojans and Achaians, mingling, slew  
 Each other, equally disdaining flight.

*Il. xvi. 765. Cowper.*

This simile, but with a totally different application,



plication, is adopted by Virgil, who has wrought the description with great force and beauty of language, and with some variety of circumstance. The comparison is to Æneas, assailed by the complaints and entreaties of Dido, but withstanding all their force.

Ac velut annoso validam cum robore quercum  
 Alpini Boreæ, nunc hinc, nunc flatibus illinc  
 Eruere inter se certant; it stridor, et alte  
 Consternunt terram concusso stipite frondes :  
 Ipsa hæret scopulis; et quantum vertice ad auras  
 Ætherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit.  
 Haud secus assiduis hinc atque hinc vocibus heros  
 Tunditur, et magno persentit pectore curas.  
 Mens immota manet; lacrymæ voluntur inanes.

*Æn.* iv. 441.

As when the winds their airy quarrel try,  
 Justling from every quarter of the sky,  
 This way and that the mountain oak they bend,  
 His boughs they shatter and his branches rend;  
 With leaves, with falling mast they spread the ground,  
 The hollow valleys echo to the sound :  
 Unmov'd, the royal plant their fury mocks,  
 Or shaken, clings more closely to the rocks;  
 Far as he shoots his towering head on high,  
 So deep in earth his fix'd foundations lie :  
 No less a storm the Trojan hero bears,  
 Thick messages and loud complaints he hears,  
 And bandy'd words still beating on his ears. }

Sighs,

Sighs, groans, and tears, proclaim his inward pains,  
But the firm purpose of his heart remains.

*Dryden.*

The remoteness of comparison in this instance may entitle the simile to be ranked in the *ingenious class*; but perhaps it is not a very happy example of the kind. The violent action of the tempest on the tree seems an exaggerated parallel to that of female importunities on the mind; and the translator appears to have felt it such, by the pains he has taken, at the hazard of a degree of the ludicrous, to aggravate the effect of the wordy assault upon the hero. From the concluding line (of the original) we may infer that a resemblance was intended to be pointed out between the shaking down of the leaves, and the excussion of the tears; which is surely a cold conceit.

Virgil has another simile derived from contending winds: in which they are made the apt comparison of the Greeks bursting into Troy from different quarters.

Adversi rupto quondam cœu turbine venti  
Confligunt, Zephyrusque, Notusque, et lætus Eois  
Eurus equis: stridunt sylvæ, sævitque tridenti  
Spumeus, atque imo Nereus ciet æquora fundo.

*Æn. ii. 416.*

As

As when the rival winds their quarrel try,  
 Contending for the kingdom of the sky ;  
 South, East, and West on airy coursers borne ;  
 The whirlwind gathers, and the woods are torn :  
 Then Nereus strikes the deep, the billows rise,  
 And, mix'd with ooze and sand, pollute the skies.

*Dryden.*

Homer, when describing Hector dealing destruction among the Greeks, relieves or enhances the picture with the following simile :

As when the West wind drives, with stormy gust,  
 Clouds by the South compell'd, on ocean's face  
 Thick roll the swelling waves, while, dash'd on high,  
 The foam is scatter'd by the sounding blast ;  
 So frequent fell the heads beneath the stroke  
 Of Hector.

*Il. xi. 305.*

The point of comparison is here, after this poet's common manner, very loosely stated ; for though, in the application of the simile, the *number of the slain* is the only circumstance noticed, which has no other parallel than the *waves* raised in the sea, the real resemblance consists in the *force of Hector*, compared to a *hurricane*, scattering the Greeks like foam.

Virgil, in a spirited imitation of this simile, has applied it with more accuracy.

Ac velut Edoni Boreæ cum spiritus alto  
 Insonat Ægæo, sequiturque ad litora fluctus,

*Qua*

Qua venti incubuere ; fugam dant nubila cœlo :  
 Sic Turnus, quacunque viam secat, agmina cedunt,  
 Conversæque ruunt acies.

*Æn. xii. 365.*

As when loud Boreas, with his blust'ring train,  
 Stoops from above, incumbent on the main ;  
 Where'er he flies, he drives the rack before,  
 And rolls the billows on th' Ægean shore ;  
 So, where resistless Turnus takes his course,  
 The scatter'd squadrons bend before his force.

*Dryden.*

The same poet derives a comparison to the speed of a courser, from a northern gale, in a finely wrought simile, the imagery of which, however, has little parallelism with the primary object.

Qualis Hyperboreis Aquilo cum densus ab oris  
 Incubuit, Scythiæque hyemes atque arida differt  
 Nubila : tum segetes altæ campique natantes  
 Lenibus horrescunt flabris, summæque sonorem  
 Dant sylvæ, longique urgent ad littora fluctus :  
 Ille volat, simul arva fuga, simul æquora verrens.

*Georg. iii. 196.*

Like Boreas in his race, when rushing forth  
 He sweeps the skies and clears the cloudy north :  
 The waving harvest bends beneath his blast ;  
 The forest shakes, the groves their honours cast ;  
 He flies aloft, and, with impetuous roar,  
 Pursues the foaming surges to the shore.

*Dryden.*

In

In this scene, the rapidity of the wind is manifested in its effects, as, indeed, it only could be; but to these effects there is no parallel in the flight of the young courser. It may be here remarked, that in any description of *action*, employed as a similitude, the point of comparison may be taken either from the *thing acting*, or from that *acted upon*. Both, indeed, to render the simile perfect, ought to have their parallels in the primary scene; but, generally, one is the leading, the other, the subordinate, figure. In most of those above quoted, derived from the action of the wind, its *power*, as an *agent*, is the main circumstance in view, displayed in different effects. In some hereafter to be produced (particularly where a storm at sea is the subject), the effect itself is the chief point of resemblance intended by the poet.

#### IV.

##### FROM SNOW, HAIL, MIST, AND DEW.

Hail and Snow, though both physically characterized as the fall of congealed water, yet differ sufficiently in their manner of descent and appearance to suggest very different images of comparison. Both, indeed, fall so thick as  
to

to afford an image of number and frequency ; but the descent of snow is gentle, and its texture remarkably loose and soft ; whereas hail is firm and hard, and falls rapidly. We shall see by examples how far their application in simile has conformed to these distinctions.

Homer compares the volley of stones showered upon the Trojans from the Grecian ramparts, to a snow-storm :

Like flakes of snow they fell, that stormy winds,  
Driving the dusky clouds, thick scatter down  
Upon the foodful earth.

*Il. xii. 156.*

In a subsequent passage, he dilates, after his manner, this simple comparison into a minute picture of a fall of snow.

.....As the feath'ry snows  
Fall frequent, on some wintry day, when Jove  
Hath ris'n to shed them on the race of man,  
And show his arrowy stores ; he lulls the winds,  
Then shakes them down continual, cov'ring thick  
Mountain tops, promontories, flow'ry meads,  
And cultur'd valleys rich ; the havens too  
Receive it largely, and the winding shores,  
But Ocean bounds it there, while Jove enwraps  
As with a fleecy mantle all beside :  
So thick alternately by Trojans hurl'd  
Against the Greeks, and by the Greeks return'd,  
The stormy volleys flew.

*Il. xii. 278. Cowper.*

The

The first of these similes presents a driving storm of snow, which has *force* as well as *frequency*; and is therefore a fitter comparison for the thing paralleled than the still soft descent of flakes in the second; which gives, indeed, a striking image of closeness and frequency, but is an absolute contrast in other points. The accessory scene in itself is highly beautiful, and cannot fail to please, if we can sufficiently forget the noise and tumult of battle to slide at once into stillness and tranquillity.

Virgil has judiciously made a hail-storm the object of similitude to a flight of missile weapons, and the fury of battle, in the two following passages :

Sternitur omne solum telis ; tum scuta cavæque  
 Dant sonitum flictu galeæ pugna aspera surgit :  
 Quantus ab occasu veniens pluvialibus Hædis  
 Verberat imber humum ; quam multa grandine nimbi  
 In vada præcipitant, cum Jupiter horridus Austris  
 Torquet aquosam hyemem, et cœlo cava nubila rumpit.

*Æn. ix. 666.*

Heaps of spent arrows fall and strew the ground,  
 And helms, and shields, and rattling arms resound.  
 The combat thickens, like the storm that flies  
 From westward, when the show'ry Kids arise :  
 Or patt'ring hail comes pouring on the main  
 When Jupiter descends in harden'd rain ;

Or

Or bellowing clouds burst with a stormy sound,  
And with an armed winter strew the ground.

*Dryden.*

..... Furit Æneas, tectusque tenet se.  
Ac velut, effusa si quando grandine nimbi  
Præcipitant, omnis campis diffugit arator,  
Omnis et agricola, et tuta latet arce viator,  
Aut amnis ripis, aut alti fornice saxi,  
Dum pluit ; in terris ut possint, sole reducto,  
Exercere diem : sic obrutus undique telis,  
Æneas, nubem belli, dum detonat, omnem  
Sustinet.

*Æn. x. 802.*

The Trojan chief.....

On his Vulcanian orb sustain'd the war.  
As when thick hail comes rattling in the wind,  
The ploughman passenger and lab'ring hind  
For shelter to the neighb'ring cover fly,  
Or hous'd, or safe in hollow caverns lie :  
But, that o'erblown, when heav'n above them smiles,  
Return to travel, and renew their toils :  
Æneas, thus o'erwhelm'd, on every side,  
The storm of darts undaunted did abide.

*Dryden.*

In the first of these similes, not only the *multitude* of darts, but their *clattering* against the armour, and the *force* of their fall, are paralleled by the hail-storm. The second is extended in Homer's manner to a detached picture, but one not incongruous with the scene which suggested it.

*Virgil*



Virgil again just touches on the same imagery, where he compares the blows given by Entellus to Dares, in the boxing match, to hail rattling on the roofs.

Homer has one simile in which the *glitter*, as well as the *thick-falling*, of snow seems to have been considered as a part of the resemblance.

And now the Grecians from their gallant fleet  
All pour'd themselves abroad. As when the snow,  
Descending thick from Jove, is driv'n by gusts  
Of the clear-blowing North, so smiled the field  
With dazzling casques, boss'd bucklers, hauberks strong,  
And polish'd weapons issuing from the fleet.

*Il. xix. 357. Cowper.*

They who have observed a snow-shower illumined by a gleam of sunshine, will be sensible of the force of this comparison.

The Grecian bard affords two other similes in which snow is introduced more happily, perhaps, than in any of the former instances. One of these is the celebrated comparison illustrative of the eloquence of Ulysses, whose words, he says, were "like wintry snows." Here, both the *softness* and *copiousness* of flakes of falling snow suggest themselves as qualities on which a resemblance equally apt and ingenious was founded in the poet's conception.

His purpose was to denote an elocution full, uninterrupted, but of that gentle persuasive nature which sinks quietly into the hearer's mind, exciting no resistance by harsh and jarring particles.

The other application is still more beautiful. He is describing the lamentation of Penelope for her supposed lost lord :

..... She, melting at the sound,  
 With drops of tenderest grief her cheeks bedew'd :  
 And as the snow, by Zephyrus diffused,  
 Melts on the mountain tops, when Eurus breathes,  
 And fills the channels of the running streams,  
 So melted she, and down her lovely cheeks  
 Pour'd fast the tears.

*Odyss. xix. 205. Cowper.*

The similitude may here be regarded both as mental and corporeal. The soul of Penelope was softened at the mournful recollection of her husband, like snow by a thawing breeze ; and tears overflowed her cheeks, like water from melting snow.

Tasso has employed only the former part of the comparison where, in the sweet description of the reconciliation of Rinaldo and Armida, he resembles the gradual melting away of her anger, to the liquefaction of snow.

*Sì parla, e prega, e i preghi bagna, e scalda  
 Hor di lagrime rare, hor di sospiri :*

*Onde*

Onde sì come suol nevosa falda,  
 Dov' arda il sole, ò tepid' aura spiri;  
 Così l'ira, che 'n lei pareva si salda,  
 Solvesi; e restan sol gl'altri desiri.

*Ger. L. xx. 136.*

He spoke, and speaking sought the fair to move  
 With sighs and tears, the eloquence of love !  
 Till, like the melting flakes of mountain snow,  
 Where shines the sun, or tepid breezes blow,  
 Her anger, late so fierce, dissolves away,  
 And gentle passions bear a milder sway.

*Hoole.*

*Mist*, an appearance so frequent in these northern climates, and so perpetually recurring as an object of description or similitude in the supposed poems of Ossian, is only once made the subject of a simile by Homer. He is describing the silent advance of the Greeks towards the enemy.

As when thick mists involve the mountain's head,  
 Fear'd by the shepherd swain, but to the thief  
 Happier than midnight, and the eye extends  
 To a stone's throw its indistinct survey;  
 With such thick dimness of excited dust  
 In their impetuous march, they fill'd the air.

*Il. iii. 10. Cowper.*

It is probable that, besides the obvious comparison in this passage of a cloud of dust to a mist, the poet had in his mind a parallel be-

tween the silent approach of the Greek army to their foes, and that of a robber to his prey. The degradation of such a parallel would in that age be little felt, and many instances show that Homer was not nice in suggesting resemblances. The image of "a thief coming by night" is used, as all may recollect, on a much more solemn occasion.

Milton affords a simile of uncommon beauty derived from the same atmospherical incident.

..... All in bright array  
 The cherubim descended ; on the ground  
 Gliding meteorous : as evening mist  
 Ris'n from a river o'er a marish glides,  
 And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel  
 Homeward returning.

*Par. L. xii. 629.*

The unsubstantial form and smooth motion attributed to these celestial beings are finely imaged by a rolling mist ; and the Homeric prolongation of the simile adds greatly to the picturesque effect.

The same poet gives a short but very poetical simile in which *Dew* is an object of comparison.

Innumerable as the stars of night,  
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun  
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.

*Par. L. v. 1745.*

The

The host of fallen angels is thus paralleled ; and not only their number, but their splendour, is taken into the resemblance.

Apollonius Rhodius, a poet certainly of very elegant invention, has employed the liquefaction of dew, as Tasso (who perhaps took the hint from him) has done that of snow in a passage above quoted, to illustrate the effect of a mental emotion. When Medea holds a conference with Jason in the temple of Hecate, already enamoured of the hero, the interview adds fuel to the flame.

..... From his yellow locks  
 Love shot a flame that took her dazzled eyes.  
 The pleasant warmth dissolv'd her inmost soul,  
 As on the rose the dew of night dissolves,  
 Thaw'd by the radiant beams of early morn.

*Argon. iii.*

## V.

### FROM TORRENTS AND RIVERS.

These striking objects in the rural landscape could not fail to attract the attention of Homer, the inhabitant of a mountainous country ; and he has accordingly made frequent use of them in simile, with such minuteness and variety of circumstance as clearly indicate the painter from nature.

The

The following is one of the most simple of the kind.

..... As a flood  
Runs headlong from the mountains to the plain  
After long show'rs from Jove ; many a dry oak,  
And many a pine, the torrent sweeps along,  
And, turbid, shoots much soil into the sea :  
So, glorious Ajax troubled wide the field,  
Horse and man slaught'ring.

*Il. xi. 492. Cowper.*

At a time when the strength and prowess of a single warrior superiorly armed was adequate to turn the fortune of a field, (which, whether a reality or not, is assumed by Homer and the epic poets who have imitated him) aggrandizing similes applied to the heroes were an appropriate ornament ; and the comparison above suggested was perhaps one of the happiest. The parallel in this passage consists not only in the general effect of the torrent, sweeping the plain before it, but in the oaks and pines which it bears down, and which may be resembled to the warriors of note who fell beneath the stroke of Ajax.

The same simile is judiciously varied in its circumstances when applied to Diomed making an attack on the Trojans, as yet drawn up in a  
body

body to oppose him, though breaking at the first onset.

He rush'd along ; as the full river rolls,  
That sweeps the bridges in its rapid course,  
When, urg'd by Jove's own showers, it sudden comes ;  
Nor can the buttress'd bridge, nor turfy mound  
That guards the cultur'd farm, its rage withstand,  
But down the smiling works of man are dash'd :  
So from Tydides' arm the Trojan bands,  
With all their numbers, shrink, nor wait the shock.

*Il. v. 87.*

Here, the accessory scene properly turns the attention to the obstacles to be overcome, as well as to the propelling force; and the mounds and bridges represent the gross phalanx of the enemy drawn up for resistance.

Virgil also employs the comparison of a swollen river, when describing the Greeks, after the demolition of barricades and gates, bursting into Priam's palace.

Non sic, aggeribus ruptis, cum spumeus amnis  
Exit, oppositasque evicit gurgite moles,  
Fertur in arva furens cumulo, camposque per omnes  
Cum stabulis armenta trahit.

*Æn. ii. 496.*

Not with so fierce a rage the foaming flood  
Roars, when he finds his rapid course withstood,  
Bears down the dams with unresisted sway,  
And sweeps the cattle and the cots away.

*Dryden.*

The

The same poet has imitated Homer in comparing his heroes individually to torrents. In the following passage both Turnus and Æneas, engaged in different parts of the field, are thus resembled :

Aut ubi decursu rapido de montibus altis  
Dant sonitum spumosi amnes, et in æquora currunt,  
Quisque suum populatus iter.

*Æn.* xii. 523.

Or rapid torrents from the mountains sweep,  
Roar down the sides, and thunder to the deep ;  
With weight resistless, and destructive sway,  
O'er half a ruin'd country take their way.

*Pitt.*

This translation, as well as Dryden's, has failed in rendering the "*Quisque suum populatus iter*"—each laying waste his own track—which is essential to the just application of the comparison to the two opposite leaders.

Homer has a noble and well-adapted simile in which the conflict of meeting torrents is described as the object of comparison to the shock of two encountering armies :

As when two torrents from the mountains shoot  
Their mingling floods, by wintry sources fed,  
Into one gulf; the solitary swain,  
Roaming the distant uplands, hears the roar ;  
Such was the thunder of the mingling hosts.

*Il.* iv. 452. *Cowper.*

The



The figure of the shepherd in this piece is merely an addition for picturesque effect ; but in an obvious imitation of the passage by Virgil, this circumstance is essential to the similitude. *Æneas* is describing the alarm which roused him from sleep on the fatal night of Troy. He ascends the roof of his house, and listens to the confused sounds, which he compares, first, to that of fire in a corn-field, and then, to the roar of a torrent.

.....aut rapidus montano flumine torrens  
Sternit agros, sternit sata læta, boumque labores,  
Præcipitesque trahit sylvas : stupet inscius alto  
Accipiens sonitum saxi de vertice pastor.  
*Æn.* ii. 305.

Or some big torrent from a mountain's brow,  
Bursts, pours, and thunders down the vale below,  
O'erwhelms the fields, lays waste the golden grain,  
And headlong sweeps the forests to the main :  
Stunn'd at the din, the swain, with list'ning ears,  
From some steep rock the sounding ruin hears.

*Pitt.*

The *peasant* here is the counterpart of *Æneas* himself ; and therefore the adjective “ *inscius*,” implying his ignorance of the cause of the din, should not have been sunk in the translation.

In the preceding Homeric similes under this head, the application is as obvious and accurate,

as

as the pictures are lively and natural ; whence it will appear more extraordinary, that in the one next to be produced, in which the description is wrought with peculiar force and exactness, the point of resemblance should be scarcely discernible. The rout of the Trojans by Patroclus, and the disgraceful flight of Hector across the foss, are the circumstances of the narrative that introduce the simile.

As when a tempest from autumnal skies  
Floats all the fields, what time Jove heaviest pours  
Impetuous rain, in token of his wrath  
Against perverters of the laws by force,  
Who drive forth justice, reckless of the Gods ;  
The rivers and the torrents, where they dwell,  
Sweep many a green declivity away,  
And, groaning, plunge at length into the deep  
From the hills headlong, leaving where they pass'd  
No traces of the pleasant works of man :  
So, flying homeward, groan'd the steeds of Troy

*Il. xvi. 384. Cowper.*

Eustathius, the great champion of Homer, acknowledges that the only point of resemblance in this minutely detailed simile, is the noise uttered by the Trojan horses in their flight, compared to that of rushing torrents—a singular exaggeration, surely, and upon an insignificant subject ! Pope, in his translation, artfully varies and extends the similitude.

Not

Not with less noise, with less impetuous force,  
The tide of Trojans urge their desperate course  
Than when &c.

And, indeed, it is not improbable that a general resemblance of the mingled rout of the Trojans to an inundation, was the leading idea in Homer's mind. The moral digression is valuable as a picture of early manners and sentiments.

Virgil also gives a simile in which the *noise* of an obstructed and rapid stream is the object of comparison. It is where the ambassadors sent to Diomedes make their report to the council of king Latinus.

Vix ea legati : variusque per ora cucurrit  
Ausonidum turbata fremor : ceu, saxa morantur  
Cum rapidos amnes, clauso fit gurgite murmur,  
Vicinæque fremunt ripæ crepitantibus undis.

*Æn.* xi. 296.

Thus of their charge the legates made report ;  
Straight ran a mingled murmur through the court :  
So when by rocks the torrents are withstood,  
In deep hoarse murmurs rolls th' imprison'd flood ;  
Beats on the banks, and, with a sullen sound,  
Works, foams, and runs in circling eddies round.

*Pitt.*

There remain two similes in Homer derived from the same source with those above quoted,  
but

but different in their scenery and application. The first is introduced where Hector, accompanied by the God Mars himself, advances to check the victorious progress of Diomede.

As when the skill-less traveller in his march  
Cross the wide plain, stops sudden on the brink  
Of some swift river rushing to the main ;  
And, as he sees it foam and murmuring rage,  
Leaps backward ; so Tydides quick withdrew.

*Il. v. 597.*

Cowper has adopted the scholiast's interpretation of the word here rendered "skill-less," as meaning "unexperienced in swimming;" but this seems an unnecessary refinement; as even a good swimmer might start back at the unexpected view of a raging river crossing his path. The picture is very lively, and the comparison sufficiently exact.

The other passage refers to the combat about the dead body of Patroclus, where the two Ajaxes repel the onset of the combined Trojans, while the body is carried off by the Greeks.

..... As a mound  
Planted with trees and stretch'd athwart the mead  
Repels an overflow ; the torrents loud  
Baffling, it sends them far away to float  
The level land, nor can they with the force  
Of all their waters burst a passage through ;

So

So firmly either Ajax in the rear

Repress'd the Trojans.

*Il. xvii. 747. Cowper.*

The steady valour of these heroes, one of whom is peculiarly termed “the bulwark of the Greeks,” could not be illustrated by a more apt and dignified comparison.

Virgil has two similes derived from rivers, of a different character from any of the preceding. The first relates to that common-place topic of the tendency of every thing terrestrial to degeneracy and decay ; which he illustrates by the comparison of a boat rowed against the stream :

..... sic omnia fatis

In pejus ruere, ac retro sublapsa referri.

Haud aliter quam qui adverso vix flumine lembum

Remigiis subigit ; si brachia forte remisit,

Atque illum in præceps pronò rapit alveus amni.

*Georg. i. 199.*

For such the changeful lot of things below,  
Still to decay they rush, and ever backwards flow.  
As one who 'gainst a stream's impetuous course  
Scarce pulls his slow boat urg'd with all his force,  
If once his vigour cease, or arms grow slack,  
Instant, with headlong haste, the torrent whirls him back.

*Warton.*

The particular application of this simile is  
to

to agricultural improvement, in which it is obviously correct. The expression of toil and difficulty, in the words *adverso, vix, subigit*, is an example of the characteristic happiness of diction in this poet, and is not unskilfully imitated by the translator.

In the other passage, Virgil, describing the allied troops under Turnus marching in a column to attack the Trojan camp, employs the following image :

Ceu septem surgens sedatis amnibus altus  
Per tacitum Ganges : aut pingui flumine Nilus,  
Cum refluit campis, et jam se condidit alveo.

*Æn.* ix. 30.

So mighty Ganges leads with awful pride  
In seven large streams his swelling solemn tide :  
So Nile, compos'd within his banks again,  
Moves in slow pomp, majestic, to the main.

*Pitt.*

There is much appropriate dignity in this comparison of the silent advance of an army, not to a torrent, but to a mighty river, filling its channel, but not overflowing. The first line of the passage, composed of spondees, and marked by alliteration, very happily coincides with the sedate grandeur of the imagery.

The inundation of a great river has furnished  
Lucan

Lucan with a well-adapted object of similitude to Pompey, bursting through Cæsar's circumvallation at Dyrrhachium, and spreading over the surrounding country.

Sic pleno Padus ore tumens super aggere tutas  
 Excurrit ripas, et totos concutit agros.  
 Succubuit si qua tellus, cumulumque furem  
 Undarum non passa ruit; tum flumine toto  
 Transit, et ignotos aperit sibi gurgite campos.  
 Illos terra fugit dominos: his rura colonis  
 Accedunt, donante Pado.

*Phars. vi. 272.*

So, raised by melting streams of Alpine snow, }  
 Beyond his utmost margin swells the Po, }  
 And loosely lets the spreading deluge flow : }  
 Where'er the weaker banks oppress retreat,  
 And sink beneath the heapy water's weight,  
 Forth gushing at the breach, they burst their way,  
 And wasteful o'er the drowned country stray :  
 Far distant fields and meads they wander o'er,  
 And visit lands they never knew before :  
 Here from its seat the mouldering earth is torn,  
 And by the flood to other masters borne ;  
 While gathering there it heaps the growing soil;  
 And loads the peasant with his neighbour's spoil.

*Rowe.*

In this simile the poet has judiciously omitted the common circumstances in the description of a river flood, such as those which denote its fury and devastations, and has confined himself

self to its taking possession, as it were, of new tracts of country, as a parallel to the diffusion of the Pompeian army after it had broken the lines of investment.

I shall conclude this head with a simile in which the circumstance of a torrent running itself dry is made a comparison of tyrannic power fallen to decay. When the cruel Marganorre, in Ariosto, is overthrown, and, with his hands tied behind him, exposed to the insults of the populace, his change of condition suggests to the poet the following image :

Come torrente, che superbo faccia  
Lunga pioggia tal volta, o nevi sciolte,  
Va ruinoso, e giù da monti caccia  
Gli arbori, e i sassi, i campi, e le ricolte ;  
Vien tempo poi, che l'orgogliosa faccia  
Gli cade, e sì le forze gli son tolte,  
Ch'un fanciullo, una femmina per tutto  
Passar lo puote, e spesso a piede asciutto.

*Orl. Fur. c. xxxvii. 110.*

As when a torrent swell'd with melting snows  
And sounding rains a mighty river grows,  
Down the steep hills it bears with sweepy sway  
Trees, cots, and stones, and labouring hinds away ;  
At length, by slow degrees, with less'ning pride  
In narrow channels rolls the shrinking tide,  
Till boys and women can the current brave,  
And dry-shod pass the late tremendous wave.

*Hoole.*

The



The terrific sway of triumphant tyranny, and the scorn and contempt consequent upon its overthrow, are happily paralleled in this comparison.

## VI.

## FROM THE SEA, SHIPPING, &amp;c.

Among the objects of nature which are calculated to fill the mind with grand and sublime ideas, none surpasses that vast expanse of water which forms the Ocean. Emulating the sky in the image it presents of boundless extent, this simplicity of effect is compounded with such a variety of appearance on its surface, that it affords an almost exhaustless store of striking scenes to the poetical observer. Of these, the greater part are of the awful and terrific kind; and Homer, whose genius and subject led him peculiarly to the contemplation of such scenery, has drawn largely from this source. He seems, like his aged Chryses, to have walked musing on the shore of the resounding main, attentive to all its changes, and fixing in his imagination the several forms it assumed, for the different purposes of description and comparison. It is justly remarked

by Pope, in a note on one of these passages, that in order adequately to judge of the beauty and fitness of such resemblances, it is necessary for the critic to have been an observer of the things themselves. How far he himself was thus qualified may occasionally be considered; but the remark is indisputably true; and in proportion as any one is able to compare Homer's descriptions with nature itself, from which alone they are copied, as well in the similes derived from this source, as in all the others, he will the better judge of their accuracy, and understand the purpose for which they are adduced.

In the sea-pieces which I shall first consider, the principal circumstances which they are brought to illustrate by comparison are *number* and *motion*.

When Agamemnon, in a harangue to the assembled Greeks, makes a feigned proposal for their return, its effect on the populace is thus described:

So moved th' assembly, as the length'ning waves  
Roll on th' Icarian sea, before the breath  
Of Eurys and of Notus, rushing down  
From clouds of father Jove.

*Il. ii. 144.*

By

By this image, the fluctuation of a great crowd agitated by various emotions, is well represented.

The armies of Greece and Troy, seated apart on the plain, in silence, in order to hear Hector's challenge to single fight, give rise to the following simile.

As when the West-wind freshens, o'er the main  
A shivering horror runs, that blackens round  
The face of Ocean, so the ranks appear'd  
Of Greeks and Trojans seated on the plain.

*Il. vii. 63,*

The armies seated in ranks, and *bristling*, as Homer says, with helmets, spears and shields, which, from the impatience natural to the occasion, would exhibit a gentle quivering motion, afford a just resemblance to the sea curled and roughened by a light breeze. But that the similitude further extends, as Pope supposes, to "the repose and awe which ensued, when Hector began to speak," I cannot perceive. To me, therefore, there appears an unhappy inconsistency with the rest of the picture in these lines of his translation :

..... the face of Ocean sleeps,  
And a still horror saddens all the deeps.

The word *horror*, if meant to correspond with the original  $\Phi\epsilon\iota\chi$ , must be understood in

its primary signification of *shivering* or *shuddering*; with which the epithet "still" is obviously incompatible. The *darkness*, too, which Pope regards as a leading circumstance, is occasioned not by the *repose*, but by the *motion* of the water, disturbing the reflection of light from its surface.

Various comparisons have already come under review by which a wavering and irresolute state of mind has been imaged; but in none, perhaps, is the image more happily suited to its purpose, than in the following simile. It is introduced where Nestor, alarmed at the view of the extreme danger to which the Greeks are exposed, knows not what counsel to give.

As when the main in dumb commotion heaves  
 Its blackening waves, presentient of the rage  
 Of whistling winds; as yet to neither side  
 The billows roll, till from above descends  
 The leading gale: so wavering doubts distract  
 The senior's soul.

Il. xiv. 16.

The state of the sea here described is not a *calm*, but a *swell without wind*, usually reckoned the forerunner of a storm. Pope, however, begins the passage with the line,

As when old Ocean's silent surface sleeps;  
 but a really quiescent state would be a defective  
 parallel

parallel to the condition of Nestor's mind, which, though undetermined, was sufficiently agitated.

Irresolution is the temper of mind illustrated also in the following simile; but differing in this, that it proceeds from the forcible action of two opposite impulses: it has accordingly suggested a sea-piece of a different character. The subject is the distress of the Greeks in their uncertainty whether to stay or depart.

As when two adverse winds blowing from Thrace,  
Boreas and Zephyrus, the fishy deep  
Vex sudden, all around, the sable flood  
High-curl'd, flings forth the salt weed on the shore;  
Such tempest rent the mind of every Greek.

*Il. ix. 4. Couper.*

The conflict of opposite winds on the main may very well represent the tumult of contending passions in the bosom; but I confess it is not without some hesitation that I can admit the exactness of description in this and other passages of Homer and his imitators, respecting the simultaneous action of contrary winds. That in a sea like that with which Homer was conversant, narrow, bounded by mountains, and interspersed with rocky islands, sudden

den gusts should arise from various quarters, and occasionally clash, I believe to be natural ; but a steady and durable opposition of winds on the same spot is a phenomenon which I can scarcely conceive to be real. At least, the artificial brewing of a tempest by setting the four winds to jostle with each other, though practised by some poets of reputation, is surely ridiculous and extravagant. This remark might have been applied to some former quotations.

Lucan has a simile derived from this contention of opposite winds on the sea, which is not liable to the preceding objection, since they are represented as blowing in succession. It is made a parallel to the conflict in the minds of the Romans between their habitual attachment to Pompey, and the recent terror of Cæsar's name.

Pronior in Magnum populus, pugnatque minaci  
Cum terrore fides : ut cum mare possidet Auster  
Flatibus horrisonis, hunc æquora tota sequuntur :  
Si rursus tellus pulsu laxata tridentis  
Æolii, tumidis immittat fluctibus Eurum,  
Quamvis icta novo, ventum tenere priorem  
Æquora, nubiferoque polus cum cesserit Euro,  
Vindicat unda Notum.

*Phars. ii. 453.*

To Pompey's part the proner people lean,  
Though Cæsar's stronger terrors stand between.

So

So when the blasts of sounding Auster blow,  
 The waves obedient to his empire flow ;  
 And though the stormy God fierce Eurus frees,  
 And sends him rushing 'cross the swelling seas,  
 Spite of his force, the billows yet retain  
 Their former course, and that way roll the main.

Rowe.

The description is not picturesque ; but the similitude is happy and well pointed.

The *sound* of the waves, and the *violence* of their assault, are circumstances added to their *mobility* and *frequency* in the following passages. It may be proper to premise, that the peculiar beauty of the Greek language in abounding with words expressive of action that are an echo to the sense, renders all translation of Homer's finest lines in some degree inadequate.

When the Greeks are called back to a general assembly after having been dismissed by Agamemnon, their return is thus described :

..... they, quitting camp and fleet again,  
 Rush'd back to council ; deaf'ning was the sound,  
 As when a billow of the boist'rous deep  
 Some broad beach dashes, and the ocean roars.

Il. ii. 207. Cowper.

The advance of the Greeks to the first battle gives occasion to the following simile :

As when, excited by the blowing West,  
 The billows crowd toward some sounding shore ;  
 First,

First, on the distant broad expanse they curl  
Their whitening heads, then, thund'ring, smite the land,  
O'erswell the rocks, and scatter wide the spray ;  
So moved the Greeks successive ; rank by rank,  
And phalanx after phalanx.

*Il. iv. 422. Cowper.*

This is a very exact picture, not of "a growing storm," as Pope represents it, but of a breeze, raising waves in the sea, which gather as they roll onwards, and at length break with violence on the shore. Its application to bodies of men, at first advancing leisurely and at intervals, then closing their ranks and quickening their march, and at last bursting upon the foe with a furious shock, is singularly happy, and must be admired by all who have been spectators of the real scene.

Virgil has closely imitated this simile, and has clothed it in all his beauty and energy of diction ; but his application of it is much less full and exact than that of the Greek poet, since the *force* and *violence* of the breaking wave is the only circumstance paralleled by the real object. He is describing the vanquished bull, after having recruited his strength in solitude, suddenly returning to renew the combat with his unexpected rival.

Fluctus



Fluctus uti, medio cœpit cum albescere ponto,  
 Longius ex altoque sinum trahit; utque volutus  
 Ad terras, immane sonat per saxa, neque ipso  
 Monte minor procumbit; at ima exæstuat unda  
 Vorticibus, nigramque alte subjectat arenam.

*Georg. iii. 235.*

As when a rising billow by degrees  
 Begins to boil amid the whitening seas;  
 Loud o'er the rocks then rolls with horrid roar,  
 And mountain-like bursts on the subject shore;  
 The troubled depths in circling eddies rise,  
 And heave the sable sands in whirlwinds to the skies.

*Warton.*

This translation, though on the whole more exact than Dryden's, has failed in rendering the appropriate expression of the original "*sinum trahit*,"—draws on a hollow or curl; and the extravagance of the concluding line is very remote from the chasteness of the original.

One of the most highly wrought sea-pieces in Homer is introduced where Hector and Paris with other chiefs rally the Trojans, and rush together into the thickest of the fight.

The march of these at once was as the sound  
 Of mighty winds from deep-hung thunder-clouds  
 Descending; clamorous the blast and wild  
 With ocean mingles; many a billow, then,  
 Upridged rides turbulent the sounding flood,  
 Foam-crested, billow after billow driv'n:

So

So moved the host of 'Troy, rank after rank,  
Behind their chiefs, all dazzling-bright in arms.

*Il. xiii. 795. Cowper.*

The comparison here is double. The chieftains are resembled to winds, and the Trojans to the waves of the sea set in motion by them. The similitude is well pointed; and the descriptive merit of the compared scene is very distinguished, particularly in the lines expressing the tumbling and foaming of the waves, which, in the original, are a remarkable instance of the consonance of sound and sense. The translator has been very happy in his imitation of this beauty.

The inexhaustible variety of nature has afforded the poet another marine picture presenting a striking image of the *noise* and *contention* of battle.

As when within some rapid river's mouth  
The billows and stream clash, on either shore  
Loud sounds the roar of waves ejected wide,  
Such seem'd the clamours of the Trojan host.

*Il. xvii. 263. Cowper.*

Here it is to be remarked, that though the poet, after his usual manner, points the simile to a single circumstance, the *noise*, yet he undoubtedly had in his mind the conflict of the  
two

two opposing currents, as a parallel to the contest of the two armies about the body of Patroclus.

Virgil gives a simile, not borrowed from Homer, but apparently drawn from his own observation of another circumstance attending the beating of waves on the shore. He has been relating the sudden flight and as sudden rallying of the Latian cavalry.

Qualis ubi alterno procurrens gurgite pontus  
Nunc ruit ad terras, scopulosque superjacet undam  
Spumeus, extremamque sinu perfundit arenam :  
Nunc rapidus retro, atque æstu revoluta resorbens  
Saxa, fugit ; littusque vado labente reliaquit.

*Æn.* xi. 624.

So swelling surges with a thund'ring roar  
Driv'n on each others' backs, insult the shore ;  
Bound o'er the rocks, incroach upon the land,  
And far upon the beach eject the sand.  
Then backward with a swing they take their way,  
Repulsed from upper ground, and seek their mother sea :  
With equal hurry quit th' invaded shore,  
And swallow back the sand and stones they spew'd before.

*Dryden.*

I choose Dryden's translation here, as the most nervous and expressive, though coarse and incorrect. The language of the original is admirable ; every word has its peculiar force and meaning, and with the precision of prose  
has

has all the spirit of poetry. The simile itself affords a lively imitation of the real scene.

The tide is a phenomenon scarcely observed in the Mediterranean, and therefore not found in Homer, and little noticed by any of the ancients. To the moderns it is familiar; and Spenser has drawn from it a comparison which he applies to one of his allegorical knights who, in a combat, having been forced to give way to the fury of his adversary, returns upon him with redoubled force.

Like as the tide that comes fro th' ocean main  
Flows up the Shenan with contrary force,  
And overruling him in his own reign,  
Drives back the current of his kindly course,  
And makes it seem to have some other source;  
But when the flood is spent, then back again  
His borrow'd waters forced to re-disburse,  
He sends the sea his own with double gain,  
And tribute eke withal, as to his souveraine.

*F. Q. iv. 3. 27.*

The simile is apt and well imagined.

The figure of a rock assailed by the waves has furnished Homer with a noble image of steady and resisting valour. It is applied to the Greeks, withstanding the assault of Hector though impelled by Jove himself.

As some vast rock beside the hoary deep  
The stress endures of many a hollow wind,

And

And the huge billows tumbling at his base ;  
So stood the Danaï, nor fled nor fear'd.

*Il. xv. 586. Cowper.*

Virgil has copied this description with improvements, in a simile illustrative of a different kind of fortitude, that of king Latinus resisting the “*civium ardor prava jubentium*”—a popular clamour urging him to a measure he disapproved.

Ille, velut pelagi rupes immota, resistit ;  
Ut pelagi rupes, magno veniente fragore  
Quæ sese, multis circum latrantibus undis,  
Mole tenet ; scopuli necquicquam et spumea circum  
Saxa fremunt, laterique illisa refunditur alga.

*Æn. vii. 586.*

But like a rock unmoved, a rock that braves  
The raging tempest and the rising waves,  
Prop'd on himself he stands ; his solid sides  
Wash off the sea-weeds and the sounding tides :  
So stood the pious prince, unmoved.

*Dryden.*

The *crash* of the sea, the *barking* waves, the *foamy* crags, and the *dashed sea-weed*, are circumstances finely selected by the poet, and but inadequately rendered by his translator, who, however, has done justice to the expression “*sese mole tenet*”—“prop'd on himself he stands.”

Virgil has applied the same comparison to  
Mezentius

Mezentius assailed by a host of enemies (*Æn.* x. 693); but in a more general description, which therefore it is unnecessary to transcribe.

The circumstance of a heaving and fluctuation still agitating the surface of the sea after a storm has subsided, is alluded to in the way of simile, by two Roman poets. Lucan applies it to the remaining agitation of the priestess of Apollo after delivering her prediction.

..... nec fessa quiescunt  
Corda; sed ut tumidus Boreæ post flamina pontus  
Rauca gemit, sic multa levant suspiria vatem.

*Phars.* v. 216.

Nor rests her wearied frame; but as the main,  
When the hoarse blasts of Boreas cease to blow,  
Still heaving groans; so swells with sighs her breast.

The other instance is in the “Hercules Furens” of the tragedian Seneca, where he represents that hero as tossing with unquiet slumber after a dreadful fit of madness.

..... nec adhuc omnes  
Expulit æstus: sed, ut ingenti  
Vexata Noto servat longos  
Unda tumultus, et jam vento  
Cessante tumet.

..... nor yet subside  
The swellings of the mental tide:  
As when, long vex'd, the troubled main  
Is wont its heavings to retain,

And

And though the storm no longer blows,  
Works blindly in tumultuous throes.

In both these passages, one of which is probably borrowed from the other, the similitude is apt and ingenious.

The poetical sea-pieces hitherto produced have been such alone as nature presents, formed of her various materials of winds, waves, rocks, shores, and the like. I shall now present some in which *man* and *human art* enter into the composition, and add life and interest to the scene.

Amidst the crowd of noble images and similes by which Homer confers dignity upon Hector's spirited attempt to destroy the Grecian navy, the following shines with distinguished lustre:

He rush'd upon them, as the furious wave,  
Swoln by the cloud-borne tempest, falls amain  
On some swift ship, and hides it all in foam :  
Amid the shrouds the roaring blasts resound ;  
And the poor sailors view with trembling hearts  
The near approach of death.

*Il. xv. 624.*

This is a picture sketched by a few masterly touches, which produce a more striking effect than minute finishing would have done. Its application as a simile is not close, but coincides

cides in the general impression of force in the assailant, and danger to the assaulted.

Such a danger, terminating in certain destruction, is painted by Ariosto as a comparison to the storming of Biserta by the Christians, where the whole army bursts in, after Brandimarte and two other knights had made good their ascent on the wall.

Come nel mar, che per tempesta freme,  
Assaglion l'acque il temerario legno,  
Ch'or dalla prora, or dalle parti estreme  
Cercano entrar con rabbia, e con disdegno;  
Il pallido nocchier sospira e geme,  
Ch'ajutar deve, e non ha cor, ne ingegno;  
Un onda vien al fin ch'occupa il tutto,  
E, dove quella entrò, segue ogni flutto.

*Orl. Fur.* xl. 29.

As midst the seas when rattling winds prevail,  
The roaring floods th' endanger'd bark assail;  
And now the prow and now the poop engage,  
To force their passage with tempestuous rage;  
Pale stands the pilot who should help supply,  
He sighs—he groans—his art and courage die;  
Till through a breach one wave its entrance speeds,  
And where it enters, wave to wave succeeds.

*Hoole.*

Another simile derived from the navigation of his time is employed by Homer to represent the joy of the Trojan army at the return of Hector accompanied by Paris.

As



As when from Jove a fav'ring gale descends  
 On longing sailors, who with polish'd oars  
 Long time have swept the main, till spent with toil  
 Their limbs are slacken'd ; thus the pair appear'd  
 To wishing Trojans.

*Il. vii. 4.*

It will perhaps appear extraordinary that Milton has not yet been quoted, as making use of a store of comparative imagery apparently so well suited to his lofty themes ; but his predecessors had anticipated him in all the most striking natural scenery presented by the sea, and where he could not improve he scorned to borrow ; nor was he, probably, very familiar with maritime views. The advanced state of navigation, however, afforded him topics of poetical description unknown to them, of which he has not failed to avail himself. Thus Satan's flight to hell upon his exploratory voyage gives rise to the following comparison :

As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd  
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
 Of Ternate or Tidore, whence merchants bring  
 Their spicy drugs ; they on the trading flood  
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape  
 Ply stemming nightly t'ward the pole ; so seem'd  
 Far off the flying fiend.

*Par. L. ii. 636.*

'This is a fine picture ; but as a simile it is

purely of the ornamental kind, for the resemblance is too faint to add clearness or force to the primary object. Nay, the ideas it excites are rather of a contrary kind ; for a spice-fleet sailing homeward under prosperous auspices is contemplated with totally opposite emotions to those which accompany the infernal fiend bent upon a purpose of hellish mischief. The imagery, however, was so pleasing to the poet's imagination, that he has repeated it, with some variety, in another simile.

..... As when to them who sail  
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past  
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow  
 Sabean odours from the spicy shore  
 Of Araby the blest : with such delay  
 Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league  
 Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles :  
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend.

*Par. L. iv. 159.*

The real point of resemblance here consists only in the fragrance of the Arabian gales compared to those of Paradise ; for there is none between Satan and the navigators, though the concluding line seems to connect them in one action. It is therefore defective as a simile ; though, like the former passage, it forms an elegant ornamental appendage to the narrative.

With

With more exactness Milton afterwards applies a simile in which the sailor's art is described with almost technical accuracy. The circuitous track of the Serpent in his cautious approach to Eve is thus paralleled with the working of a ship:

As when a ship by skilful steersman wrought  
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind  
Veers oft, as oft so steers and shifts her sail;  
So varied he.

*Par. L. ix. 513.*

The description and application are both very happy; it is difficult, however, to defend our great poet in this passage from a charge of plagiarism. In Dr. Newton's edition of Milton a quotation is given from the "*Poemata Sacra*" of one Andrew Ramsay, a Scotch divine, published in 1633, containing the same image, in words so similar, and so identical in its personal application, that, unwilling as the editor is to admit the fact, I do not see the possibility of rejecting such striking *marks of imitation*. Ramsay's subject is Christ's temptation; and he applies the simile not, indeed, to the corporeal motion of the serpent, but to the changeful wiles by which the Devil (whom he calls the Tartarean Snake) attempted to effect his purpose.

..... Ut vento portum qui forte reflante  
 Non potis est capere, is malos et lintea vela  
 Carbaseosque sinus obliquat, tendere recta  
 Qua nequit, incurvo radit vada cœrula cursu ;  
 Sic gnarus versare dolos, et imagine falsa  
 Ludere Tartareus coluber, contingere metam  
 Se non posse videns primo molimine, cursum  
 Mutat, et ad palmam converso tramite tendit.

As when a mariner, whom adverse winds  
 Forbid to make his port, from side to side  
 His yards and bellying canvass shifts, and steers  
 Through the blue waves a sinuous track oblique :  
 So, versed in wiles, and skilful to delude,  
 Th' infernal Serpent, baffled in his aim,  
 His course deserts, and tries a different path.

That Milton never saw or heard these lines, as Dr. Newton chooses to suppose, seems highly improbable ; but how far it is a literary crime to transplant a beauty from a writer in another language, without acknowledgement, may bear a question. We have seen that the greater part of Virgil's similes are copies of those of Homer. Succeeding poets have closely imitated Virgil ; but in these cases the delicacy of acknowledgement seems never to have been thought of ; and poetical ideas have been regarded as a common fund, whence all were free to draw what suited their purpose. Doubtless, however, the merit of invention is forfeited  
 whenever

whenever such appropriations can be clearly pointed out.

The mariner's art has furnished Spenser with two similes of the ingenious kind. The first is applied to Sir Guyon, when, after he has lost the palmer, his faithful guide, he proceeds on his way in the confidence of his own honourable actions.

As pilot well expert in perilous wave,  
That to a stedfast star his course hath bent,  
When foggy mists or cloudy tempests have  
The faithful light of that fair lamp yblent,  
And cover'd heav'n with hideous dreariment,  
Upon his card and compass firms his eye  
(The masters of his long experiment)  
And to them does the stiddy helm apply  
Bidding his winged vessel fairly forward fly.

*F. Q.* ii. 7. 1.

A condition the direct opposite of this is represented by Statius, where he compares Polynices travelling in a stormy night through a dark forest, to a mariner ignorant of his course in a stormy sea.

Ac velut hyberno deprensus navita ponto  
Cui neque temo piger, neque amico sidere monstrat  
Luna vias, medio cæli pelagique tumultu  
Stat rationis inops; jam jamque aut saxa malignis  
Expectat submersa vadis, aut vertice acuto

*Spumantes*

Spumantes scopulos erectæ occurrere proræ :  
 Talis opaca legens nemorum Cadmeius heros  
 Accelerat. *Theb. i. 370.*

The Sailor thus, in wintry seas surprised,  
 When nor the sluggish Wain, nor Cynthia's orb,  
 Emits a guiding ray, while rage around  
 The winds and waves, perplex'd and heartless stands,  
 In momentary dread to feel his bark  
 Grate on the sunken rocks, or see it dash  
 Its lofty prow full on the foamy crags.

This is a strongly painted scene : but perhaps the danger by sea is too formidable for a just comparison to that by land with which it is paralleled.

Spenser's second marine simile is elegantly made a kind of illustrative apology for the frequent digressions in his great poem, by which the thread of narration is interrupted, though, as he affirms, not broken.

Like as a ship, that through the ocean wide  
 Directs her course unto one certain coast,  
 Is met of many a counter-wind and tide,  
 With which her winged speed is let and crost,  
 And she herself in stormy surges tost ;  
 Yet making many a borde and many a bay,  
 Still winneth way, ne hath her compass lost ;  
 Right so it fares with me in this long way,  
 Whose course is often stay'd, yet never is astray.

*F. Q. xii. 12. 1.*

The

The management of a state has been so familiarly compared to holding the helm of a ship, that the metaphor has almost become common language. Silius Italicus, however, has opened the resemblance in a simile which is pointed with much satirical force. He applies it to the consul Flaminius, whose rashness and presumption caused so much mischief in the second Punic war.

Ut pelagi rudis, et pontum tractare per artem  
Nescius, accepit miseræ si jura carinæ,  
Ventorum tenet ipse vicem, cunctisque procellis  
Dat jactare ratem : fertur vaga gurgite puppis,  
Ipsius in scopulos dextra impellente magistri.

*Lib. iv. 715.*

As he who takes a hapless vessel's helm,  
New to the sea, nor taught the pilot's art,  
Becomes himself the storm, and gives the bark  
A sport to every gale : wide o'er the main  
She flies, his own rash hand amid the rocks  
Steering her fatal course.

Lucan, describing the precipitate desertion of Rome on the approach of Cæsar, introduces the simile of a ship in a storm forsaken by its crew :

..... qualis cum turbidus Auster  
Repulit a Libycis immensum Syrtibus æquor,  
Fractaque veliferi sonuerunt pondera mali,  
Desilit in fluctus deserta puppe magister,

Navitaque,

Navitaque, et nondum sparsa compage carinæ ;  
 Naufragium sibi quisque facit. *Phars. i. 498.*

So when the stormy South is heard to roar,  
 And rolls huge billows from the Libyan shore ;  
 When rending sails flit with the driving blast,  
 And with a crash down comes the lofty mast ;  
 Some coward master leaps from off the deck,  
 And, hasty to despair, prevents the wreck ;  
 And though the bark unbroken hold her way,  
 Her trembling crew all plunge into the sea.

*Rowe.*

The resemblance is striking, and applies in every particular. The master is represented by Pompey, who forfeited his character for magnanimity by hastily quitting the capital, and was followed by all the senatorian party. Rome was not only the head, but, as it were, the great vessel of the state ; and they who deserted it were in an open sea of civil contest. Were not the image obvious, Lucan might have derived it from the allegorical ode of Horace, in which the Roman republic is warned of the danger of new domestic contentions, by the symbol of a crazy ship carried out to sea.

Milton is apparently quite original in the simile in which he compares the fair and wanton Dalila, in full dress, to a well rigged ship :

But who is this, what thing of sea or land !  
 Female of sex it seems,

That



That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,  
 Comes this way sailing,  
 Like a stately ship  
 Of Javan or Gadire,  
 With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,  
 Sails fill'd and streamers waving,  
 Courted by all the winds that hold them play.

*Samps. Agon, 714.*

The graceful figure and easy motion of a fine woman could scarcely be more happily imaged than by this similitude.

It would be easy to fill pages with poetical passages in which human life is compared to a voyage, and the individual to a vessel sailing over the wide ocean of time. Some beautiful examples of this image will readily occur to the memory of every reader of the English poets. Such is the exquisitely wrought metaphor introduced by Pope in the fine apostrophe to Lord Bolingbroke which concludes the "Essay on Man:"

Oh! while along the stream of Time thy name  
 Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,  
 Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
 Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale!

Such, too, is the simile in Gray's "Bard," alluding to the fate of Richard II:

Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the Zephyr blows,  
 While proudly riding o'er the azure realm,

In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,  
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm ;  
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,  
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

The figure of the Tempest watching in silence for the time to spring upon his victim is a truly sublime conception.

I am, however, acquainted with no example in which this comparison is maintained with such a variety of ingenious parallel, as in the allegory that concludes Green's very original poem on "the Spleen."

## VII.

### FROM FIRE AND FLAME.

The element of Fire, from the violence and rapidity of its action, and the splendour it lends to objects when excited to combustion, is capable of affording a variety of striking images for poetical comparison. These could not escape the notice of so accurate an observer of every natural occurrence as Homer ; and accordingly, conflagration in some of its forms is the subject of several of his similes.

The circumstance, not unfrequent in a hot and arid climate, of a wood set on fire, has furnished him with three similes, in one of which

which the *splendour*, in the others the *violence*, of the flames is the point of resemblance. In that cluster of comparisons which distinguishes the first advance to battle of the Grecian army, we meet with the following :

As when devouring flames some forest seize  
On the high mountains, splendid from afar  
The blaze appears ; so, moving on the plain,  
The steel-clad host innum'rous flash'd to heav'n.

*Il. ii. 455. Cowper.*

The pursuit of the Trojans by Agamemnon gives occasion to the same image, except that a thicket, and not a tall wood, is made the scene of the conflagration \*, perhaps, as an apter comparison for the quick overthrow of an undistinguished multitude.

As when devouring flames a thicket seize,  
This way and that by whirling winds dispers'd ;  
Beneath the fiery force the shrubs around  
Fall by the roots : thus by Atrides' arm  
The heads of flying Trojans low were laid.

*Il. xi. 155.*

The poet rises in diction and imagery where Achilles, in like manner, is described as deal-

\* I am induced so to interpret the passage, not only from the equivocal epithet *αξυλω*, but the word *θαμνοί*, which is unquestionably appropriated to shrubs.

ing destruction all round him in the midst of the Trojan host.

As on some arid hill a raging fire  
Runs madly through the dells, till all the wood  
Is wrapt in flames, while, by the wind convolv'd,  
This way and that the fiery flakes are hurl'd :  
So raged on every side the deathful spear.

*Il. xx. 490.*

The scene is here distinctly painted : the fire runs along the woody hollows interposed between the several summits of the mountain, and, aided by the eddying wind, spreads itself through all the extent of cover. Besides the resemblance in the *destructive force* of the fire, it can scarcely be doubted that in the poet's mind the *glittering* of the Vulcanian spear was paralleled by the *brightness* of the flame.

Virgil, in an imitation of this and the preceding passages, has enriched and extended the simile by the figure of the author of the conflagration rejoicing in the accomplishment of his purpose :

Ac velut optato, ventis æstate coortis,  
Dispersa immittit sylvis incendia pastor ;  
Correptis subito mediis, extenditur una  
Horrida per latos acies Vulcania campos :  
Ille sedens victor flammas despectat ovantes :  
Non aliter sociùm virtus coit omnis in unum,  
Teque juvat, Palla.

*Æn. x. 404.*

As

As when in summer welcome winds arise,  
 The watchful shepherd to the forest flies,  
 And fires the midmost plants ; contagion spreads,  
 And catching flames infect the neighb'ring heads ;  
 Around the forest flies the furious blast,  
 And all the leafy nation sinks at last,  
 And Vulcan rides in triumph o'er the waste :  
 The pastor, pleas'd with his dire victory,  
 Beholds the satiate flames in sheets ascend the sky :  
 So Pallas' troops their scatter'd strength unite,  
 And pouring on their foes, their prince delight.

*Dryden.*

Neither this nor Pitt's version has done justice to the figure of the shepherd, who, proud of his conquest, *looks down* on the *triumphing* flames. Its application to Pallas, however, does not seem very appropriate, since that prince was himself actively engaged as the leader and example of the fight, and did not sit, like the shepherd, a quiet spectator of the devastation he had set at work. It is proper to observe, that the learned Heyne, not conceiving any adequate motive for the shepherd to set fire to a wood or forest, interprets, with some probability, the Latin "*sylva*" to mean only, in the artificial diction of Virgil, a field covered with stubble or weeds, and fired as a preparation for culture.

This rural circumstance is expressly made the  
 subject

subject of a simile by Ariosto, when describing the overthrow and slaughter of a whole troop by the furious Mandricardo :

Come in palude asciutta, dura poco  
Stridula canna, o in campo arida stoppia,  
Contra il soffio di Borea, e contra il foco,  
Che 'l cauto agricoltore insieme accoppia,  
Quando la vaga fiamma occupa il loco,  
E scorre per li solchi, e stride, e scoppia :  
Così costor contra la furia accesa  
Di Mandricardo fan poca difesa.

*Orl. Fur. c. xiv. 48.*

As in the arid fields, or sun-dried meads,  
The brittle stubble and the spiky reeds  
Resist but little when the wary hind  
Kindles the flame, to which the northern wind  
Gives double force, till wide around it preys,  
And all the furrows crackle in the blaze ;  
So these alike in vain defence engage  
With haughty Mandricardo's dreadful rage.

*Hoole.*

Three other different similes derived from conflagration are presented from the exhaustless fund of Homer's observation. The first is taken from the spreading fire in a city ; and its application is to the Ajaxes, pressed by the pursuing Trojans, as they retreated with the body of Patroclus :

..... tempestuous war  
Their steps attending ; rapid as the flames

*Which,*

Which, kindled suddenly, some city waste;  
 Consumed amid' the blaze, house after house  
 Sinks, and the wind, meantime, roars through the fire;  
 So them a deafening tumult as they went  
 Pursued, of horses and of men spear-arm'd.

*Il. xvii. 736. Cowper.*

A more striking image could scarcely have been given of the danger incurred by these heroes, while the whole brunt of battle urged their retiring steps.

The numerous islands of the Archipelago, the theatre, in Homer's time, of continual war and rapine, of reciprocal invasions and mutual leagues of defence, must frequently have exhibited the spectacle of what the poet has represented in the following lively draught:

As when some island, situate afar  
 On the wide waves, invested all the day  
 By cruel foes from their own city pour'd,  
 Upsends a smoke to heav'n, and torches shows  
 On all her turrets at the close of eve  
 Which flash against the clouds, kindled in hope  
 Of aid from neighbour maritime allies;  
 So from Achilles' head light flash'd to heav'n.

*Il. xviii. 207. Cowper.*

I doubt not here, that besides the external resemblance of the two luminous appearances, the poet had in view the occasion of both, as connected with succour and relief; though in reality

reality that from the head of Achilles was a token of his being about to *bestow* aid, whilst the signals in the island were to *demand* it: but this laxity of association is common to the rapid conceptions of the Grecian bard.

The third Homeric simile is likewise derived from the stock of ideas which the poet had gained from his maritime residence.

Such as to mariners a fire appears,  
Kindled by shepherds on the distant top  
Of some lone hill; they, driv'n by stormy winds,  
Reluctant roam far off the fishy deep:  
Such from Achilles' burning shield divine  
A lustre struck the skies.

*Il. xix. 375. Cowper.*

The resemblance here consists merely in the objects—one light compared to another.

True poets are the same in all ages. The impression made on the imagination of the old Greek bard by the vivid action of this element, was not different from that felt by the living poet to whom it suggested the following simile:

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke....  
As flashes flame through sable smoke,  
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,  
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,  
So the deep anguish of despair  
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.

*Lady of the Lake, ii. 34.*

The



The writer of the cultured age is only distinguished from his remote predecessor, by applying his description to parallel a mental emotion, instead of another sensible object.

## VIII.

## FROM ROCKS AND MOUNTAINS.

Those noble and striking objects have afforded fewer images of comparison to the epic poets than might have been expected; the reason of which has probably been, that their *immobility* precluded them from being fit representatives of heroic action. We have already seen among the sea-pieces, examples in which a rock beaten by the waves has been very happily adduced as an illustration of passive valour. In the following similes, motion is, as it were, artificially imparted to these great masses for the purpose of rendering them images of active force.

The first is from Homer :

As when a torrent swoln by frequent rains  
A rock's round fragment from its stony bonds  
Rends on the mountain's brow ; it bursts away,  
And flies high-bounding, while beneath its shocks  
The wood re-echoes ; still it sweeps along,  
Till, at the plain arrived, no more it rolls,

Though launch'd with force : so Hector, threatening loud  
 Swift to the tents and ships to hew his way,  
 Close on the phalanx stop'd.

*Il. xii. 157.*

Virgil has thus imitated this passage :

Ac veluti montis saxum de vertice præceps  
 Cum ruit avulsum vento, seu turbidus imber  
 Proluit, aut annis solvit sublapsa vetustas ;  
 Fertur in abruptum magno mons improbus actu,  
 Exultatque solo ; sylvas, armenta, virosque  
 Involvens secum : disjecta per agmina Turnus  
 Sic urbis ruit ad muros.

*Æn. xii. 684.*

As when, by age, or rains, or tempests torn,  
 A rock from some high precipice is borne,  
 'Trees, herds and swains involving in the sweep,  
 The mass flies furious from th' ærial steep ;  
 Leaps down the mountain's side with many a bound  
 In fiery whirls, and smokes along the ground :  
 So to the city, through the cleaving train,  
 .....  
 ..... the raging hero breaks his way.

*Pitt.*

In comparing the two similes, Pope gives the most decided preference to that of Homer, chiefly because it includes more points of resemblance : as, first, the *descent* of Hector from the Grecian mound, as well as his rapid motion ; and then, his *sudden stop* in front of the closely-wedged phalanx of the Ajaxes. So far his observations seem just ; but I confess I cannot

cannot enter into what he considers as the happiest branch of resemblance, the *immobility* of both when so stopped, "the enemy being as unable to move him back, as he to get forward:" conformably to which notion, he says, in his translation,

.....so Hector. . . . their whole force he proved,  
Resistless when he raged, and when he stop'd, unmoved.

But for this I find no authority in the original; for Homer, though making him at first stand firm, represents the Greeks as advancing, and "pushing him from them," when he *draws back* enraged.

Another difference between the two poets is obvious: Homer, painting after nature, gives no circumstance which surpasses the limits of strict probability; but Virgil, copying after him, and desirous, according to the usual practice of imitators, of transcending the original, runs into manifest exaggeration, his rocky mass being converted, in its descent, into a mountain ("mons improbus") bearing down not only men and herds, but whole woods.

The English poet appears with his accustomed dignity and originality after these masters, taking from them, at most, a hint, which he has ex-

panded into an image of superior grandeur.  
When Satan recoils from the stroke of Abdiel,  
the effect is

.....as if on earth  
Winds underground, or waters, forcing way,  
Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,  
Half sunk with all his pines.

*Par. L. vi. 195.*

Here is no exaggeration, since the cause assigned for the removal of the mountain is proved by fact to be adequate to the effect.

One of the most highly wrought similes in Virgil is introduced where Æneas in the confidence of superiority flies to the combat with Turnus :

.....opera omnia rumpit,  
Lætitia exultans, horrendumque insonat armis ;  
Quantus Athos, aut quantus Eryx, aut ipse coruscis  
Cum fremit ilicibus quantus, gaudetque nivali  
Vertice se attollens pater Apenninus ad auras.

*Æn. xii. 699.*

He springs to fight, exulting in his force ;  
His jointed armour rattles in the course.  
Like Eryx, or like Athos, great he shows,  
Or father Apennine, when, white with snows,  
His head divine obscure in clouds he hides,  
And shakes the sounding forest on his sides.

*Dryden.*

In this image there is true grandeur; though,  
perhaps,

perhaps, a defect of similitude may be alleged in comparing the hero moving impatiently to battle, to so immoveable an object as a vast mountain. The poet, indeed, has given a kind of action to father Apennine, in the agitation of the ilex-wood on its sides, intended as a parallel to the rattling armour of Æneas: but this is rather a conceit; and in fact the whole simile has appeared to some critics extravagant and ill applied.

Milton, in imitating this passage, had only the purpose of presenting an impressive image of strength and stability:

..... On th' other side Satan alarm'd,

Collecting all his might, dilated stood,

Like Teneriff or Atlas unremoved.

His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest

Sat Horror plumed.

*Par. L. iv. 985.*

The description is here expended upon the figure of Satan himself, and the mountains are only allusively introduced as well-known objects. This was proper; as the fallen archangel is supposed of superior magnitude to any single terrestrial object, and therefore the latter could only be employed to illustrate, not to aggrandize.

Hitherto mountains have been regarded in  
comparison

comparison as images of awe or terror ; but the circumstance of their sometimes soaring above the region of atmospherical turbulence, and rearing their summits in pure and untroubled ether, has afforded a sublime emblem of the tranquillity enjoyed by the pious and virtuous man amid the changes of human life. The thought is not original to Goldsmith, but he has wrought it to a very beautiful simile, applied to his interesting portrait of the Village Preacher. It follows the line

..... all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven ;

which points the resemblance :

As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,  
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

*Deserted Village.*

## IX.

### FROM WILD BEASTS.

Homer abounds in similes taken from the actions and characters of the ferocious animals, which, in the ruder states and pastoral occupations of men, were continually engaging the attention of the rural inhabitants. Their devastations among the domestic species, their encounters

encounters with each other, and the mutual warfare carried on between them and the human race, could not fail to impress the mind with a variety of striking scenes. The application of imagery derived from this source to the circumstances of military transactions is so obvious, that little ingenuity can be displayed in the discovery of either general or particular points of resemblance; and the chief merit of comparisons of this class must consist in the force and fidelity of description. The Grecian bard in these respects is confessedly unrivalled. Every stroke in his pictures is a proof that he copied from nature herself; and his epic successors have done little more in their happiest efforts than judiciously selecting, and adorning with the beauties of diction, the various images with which he had supplied them.

Amidst the similes under this head, those in which the *Lion* forms the principal figure are by much the most frequent in the works of Homer. The high courage and terrific force of this noble animal, undoubtedly the king of the forest where the royal tiger is not known, rendered him peculiarly fit for comparison with the heroes of an age when the strength and prowess of a single individual were eminently  
conspicuous

conspicuous in battle. To consider every instance in which the simile of a Lion is introduced, would prove tedious and uninteresting, on account of the frequent sameness both of the real and the compared scene. I shall therefore select a few of those which are the most varied in their circumstances and application, and the most valuable as natural pictures.

The common occurrence in countries infested by wild beasts, of a nocturnal attack by a lion upon the folds or stalls, has given occasion to three striking similes in Homer, each distinguished by some variation in its circumstances. In the first that I shall adduce, the assault is effectually repelled :

As from the folded stalls a nightly guard  
Of dogs and rustics all the rage repel  
Of some fierce Lion, greedy for the flesh  
Of fatted kine ; in vain he rushes on ;  
So thick the javelins hurl'd by vent'rous hands,  
And flaming torches, fly, that held in awe,  
Though much desiring, at the morning's dawn  
Sad he retires : the mighty Ajax thus,  
With swelling heart indignant quits the field.

*Il. xi. 547.*

This is a truly characteristic picture, but not very correctly applied, since Ajax is not, like the lion, making an attack, but is standing on the defensive.

In



In the next instance, the powers of the assailant and defenders are almost equally balanced; and this parity takes place both in the real and the resembling scene. Sarpedon's spirited attempt to break through the Grecian rampart is thus paralleled:

..... As the Lion mountain bred,  
After long fast, and by the impulse urged  
Of his undaunted heart, invades the flock  
Even in the shelter of their guarded home;  
He finds, perchance, the shepherds arm'd with spears,  
And all their dogs awake; yet not for them  
Resigns his hope, but either leaps the fence,  
And entering tears the prey, or in th' attempt  
Pierced by some dext'rous peasant, bleeds himself:  
So his high courage to the assault impell'd  
Godlike Sarpedon &c.

*Il. xii. 299. Cowper.*

In the following passage the assailant is only roused to more vigorous exertion by resistance, and proves completely victorious. Diomedes, slightly wounded by the arrow of Pandarus, rushes again to the fight:

..... nor less enraged  
Than some gaunt Lion by the shepherd gall'd  
As he o'erleap'd the fold, and whom his wound,  
Too slight, provokes the more; thenceforth the swain  
Lurks unresisting; flies th' abandon'd flock;  
Heaps slain on heaps he leaves, and with a bound  
Surmounting all impediments escapes:

Such

Such seem'd the valiant Diomede incensed  
To fury mingling with the host of Troy.

*Il. v. 136. Cowper.*

This is an exact comparison; and the impetuous courage by which Diomede is distinguished in the *Iliad*, well entitles him to be represented by a lion.

The propensity of this animal at all hazards to revenge an affront (which is common to most of the larger beasts of prey) is displayed in a most animated description applied as a simile by Homer.

..... The ravening Lion, thus,  
Whom all th' assembled country round pursue  
Intent to kill, at first moves careless on;  
Till, by the spear of some bold hunter struck,  
He writhing yawns, he foams, his generous breast  
Indignant groans, with busy tail his sides  
And flanks he lashes, rousing to the fight;  
Then, sternly scowling, rushes headlong on,  
Resolved on slaughter, or a glorious death.

*Il. xx. 164.*

It has already been remarked that some of the most elaborate draughts of scenes in comparison, by this poet, disappoint the reader by their defective application; and this fine picture is among the number; for it is only introductory to the *single combat*, in which Achilles,

not

not previously *wounded*, engages with Æneas, an unequal antagonist.

Virgil, in a spirited imitation of the passage, applies it, with equal laxity, to Turnus inflamed to fury by the public outcry against him on account of the unsuccessful commencement of the war with Æneas :

..... Pœnorum qualis in arvis  
Saucius ille gravi venantum vulnere pectus,  
Tum demum movet arma Leo ; gaudetque comantes  
Excutiens cervice toros, fixumque latronis  
Impavidus frangit telum, et fremit ore cruento :  
Haud secus accenso gliscit violentia Turno.

*Æn. xii. 4.*

As, pierced at distance by the hunter's dart,  
The Libyan Lion rouses at the smart,  
And loudly roaring traverses the plain,  
Scourges his sides, and rears his horrid mane,  
Tugs furious at the spear, the foe defies,  
And grinds his teeth for rage, and to the combat flies :  
So storm'd proud Turnus.

*Pitt.*

The added circumstances of "shaking his bristling mane," and "breaking the javelin fixed in his side," are well conceived, and expressed with great energy.

I shall add another picture of a similar kind from Homer, chiefly on account of the accurate minuteness with which it represents the chase  
of

of a wild beast, as still practised in various countries.

As when amid the throng of dogs and men  
 A Boar or Lion fiercely glaring stands ;  
 Close wedged in troops the hunters round advance,  
 And launch the frequent dart ; yet undismay'd,  
 Nor fear nor flight his generous heart allows,  
 But spurs him to his fate : the bands of foes  
 Oft turning he assails ; as oft the foes,  
 Where'er he rushes, yield. Il. xii. 41.

The comparison is applied to Hector, trying to force a passage across the Grecian rampart ; and has therefore the defect of paralleling an action of assault with one of defence.

Virgil, in a concise copy of this simile (*Æn.* ix. 551.) has added the circumstance of the beast's throwing himself upon the points of the encircling hunting-poles ; and has applied it, more correctly, to Helenor rushing upon the spears of the surrounding enemies.

A very striking picture derived from the chase of the Lion, in which, however, the hunter himself is the principal figure, is given by Statius, as a comparison to the agitation of mind in which Eteocles accompanied Tiresias to the evocation of the shades of the dead.

Qualis Gætulæ stabulantem ad confraga sylvæ  
 Venator longo motum clamore Leonem

Expectat

Expectat firmans animum, et sudantia nisu  
 Tela premens : gelat ora pavor, gressusque tremiscunt  
 Quis veniat, quantusque, sed horrida signa frementis  
 Accipit, et cæca metitur murmura cura.

*Theb. iv. 494.*

As near the rugged bound of some wild wood,  
 The Lion's haunt, an Afric Huntsman stands,  
 Waiting till shouts redoubled call him forth ;  
 In chill suspense, with trembling heart and limbs,  
 He chides his fears, and straining points the spear  
 With sweat bedew'd : meanwhile his busy thought  
 Dwells on the foe, how large, how fierce he comes ;  
 And hearing soon the horrid growl, appall'd,  
 Measures the savage by his deepen'd roar.

A most spirited representation of a Lion  
 tearing his prey is given by Homer in the  
 following simile :

As when the mountain-lion, fierce in strength,  
 Amid the grazing herd the fairest head  
 Selects his prey ; he first the sinewy neck  
 Breaks with strong teeth ; then, tearing wide his way,  
 Drinks down the blood, and all the entrails quaffs ;  
 And though the baying dogs, and herdsman round  
 At distance clamour loud, dares none advance  
 And brave the fight, pale fear so chills their breasts :  
 Thus 'mid the Trojan bands no heart sustain'd  
 To meet Atrides, glorying in his might.

*Il. xvii. 61.*

The resemblance here is the more exact, as  
 Menelaus employs himself in stripping Eu-  
 phorbus of his armour after he had slain him.

The

The joy with which the same hero is inspired when he beholds Paris coming to encounter him, is displayed in a simile nearly of the same kind.

So joys the Lion when a mighty prey  
Hunger'd he seizes ; or the antler'd stag,  
Or shaggy goat : with greedy haste he tears,  
He gorges, though around the active hounds  
And mettled youth attack.

*Il. iii. 23.*

This description anticipates an event which is only expected in the real action. Virgil applies the simile more correctly in his imitation of it. The subject is Mezentius rushing upon and killing the youthful warrior Acron, distinguished by his glittering ornaments.

Impastus stabula alta Leo ceu sæpe peragrans,  
(Suadet enim vesana fames) si forte fugacem  
Conspexit capream, aut surgentem in cornua cervum,  
Gaudet hians immane, comasque arrexit, et hæret  
Visceribus super incumbens ; lavit improba teter  
Ora cruor.

*Æn. x. 723.*

As when a Lion that, with hunger bold,  
Roams grimly round the fences of the fold,  
Spies a tall goat, the chief of all the train,  
Or beamy stag, high-stalking o'er the plain ;  
His horrid mane he rears, he runs, he flies,  
Expands his jaws, and darts upon the prize ;

The

The prize he rends with a tremendous roar,  
And, growling, rages in a foam of gore.

*Pitt.*

There appears to be an impropriety in representing the Lion as prowling about the *stalls* or *folds* when he meets with the *stag* or *roe-buck* (for *caprea* is erroneously rendered a *goat*) which are inhabitants of the forest. In other respects, the description has great merit; in particular, the epithet "*surgentem in cornua*," (rising in antlers,) given to the stag, is highly poetical. The word *beamy*, borrowed by this translator from Dryden, is intended to express the same image. *High-stalking* is foreign to the purpose; and both this and Dryden's version of the passage is loose and inadequate.

Statius, who, though upon the whole a turgid and unnatural writer, frequently, in his search after novelty, falls upon truly poetical ideas, has given a picture of a Lion satiated with slaughter which possesses much descriptive merit. The comparison is applied to Tydeus after his exploit of killing the whole party posted to intercept him.

Ut Leo, qui campis longe custode fugato  
Massylas depastus oves, ubi sanguine multo  
Luxuriata fames, cervixque, et tabe gravatæ  
Consedere jubæ, mediis in cædibus astat

*Æger*

*Æger hians, victusque cibus : nec jam amplius iræ  
Crudescunt, tantum vacuis ferit aera malis,  
Molliaque ejecta delambit vellera lingua.*

*Theb. ii. 675.*

Thus when, the guardian swain to distance fled,  
An Afric Lion with the slaughter'd flock  
Has gorged his ravenous maw, and quaff'd the blood  
Luxuriant ; on his neck his shaggy mane,  
Weighty with gore, reclines ; amid the prey  
Panting he stands and satiate ; spent his rage,  
He champs alone the air with vacant jaws,  
And licks the fleeces with his lolling tongue.

Another simile in Homer subjoins a striking and characteristic circumstance relative to this animal. The stern resolution of Ajax in protecting the dead body of Patroclus suggests the following image :

He stood, as broods a Lion o'er his young,  
Whom, through the forest as his whelps he leads,  
The hunters meet : he grimly glares around,  
And all his angry brow in folds descends  
To veil his eyes.

*Il. xvii. 133.*

It is impossible to doubt that such a picture was taken from the life.

The same poet has described the manner in which the Lion is affected by the loss of his whelps, in a simile comparing this animal to Achilles, both grieved and enraged at the death of Patroclus.



As the grim Lion, from whose gloomy lair  
 Among thick trees the hunter hath his whelps  
 Purloin'd, too late returning mourns his loss ;  
 Then up and down, the length of many a vale  
 Courses, exploring fierce the robber's foot :  
 Incens'd as he..... Achilles spake.

*Il. xviii. 318. Cowper.*

In order to complete the poetical history of the king of beasts, I shall add three similes ; exhibiting the tamed, the aged, and the dying lion.

When, in the “ Jerusalem Delivered,” the turbulent Argillano has excited a sedition against Goffredo, which that chief quells by the air of authority with which he addresses the mutineers, who quietly suffer the ringleader to be arrested ; the awe with which they are struck is finely represented by the following comparison :

Così Leon, ch'anzi l'horribil coma  
 Con muggito scotea superbo e fero ;  
 Se poi vede il ministro, onde fu doma  
 La natia ferità del core altero,  
 Può del giogo soffrir l'ignobil soma,  
 E teme le minaccie e'l duro impero :  
 Ne i gran velli, i gran denti, e l'unghie, c'hanno  
 Tanto in se forza, insuperbire il fanno.

*Ger. Lib. viii. 83.*

So when his shaggy mane a Lion shakes,  
 And with loud roar his slumb'ring fury wakes ;

If chance he views the man whose soothing art  
 First tam'd the fierceness of his lofty heart,  
 His pride consents th' ignoble yoke to wear ;  
 He fears the well-known voice, and rule severe :  
 Vain are his claws, his dreadful teeth are vain :  
 He yields submissive to his keeper's chain.

*Hoole.*

It can scarcely be doubted that Waller had this passage in his eye when he applied the same simile in his "Panegyrick upon Oliver Cromwell."

When, in the Thebaid, Ædipus, after the mutual slaughter of his sons, crawls from his retreat, and, led by his daughter Antigone, appears before king Creon, he himself makes a proud speech to the new monarch, but Antigone throws herself at his feet as a suppliant. The wretched old man, indignant, draws her away ; and his mood and condition are thus paralleled :

..... qualis Leo rupe sub alta,  
 Quem viridem quondam sylvæ montesque tremebant ;  
 Jam piger, et longo jacet exarmatus ab ævo,  
 Magna tamen facies, et non adeunda senectus :  
 Et si demissas veniat mugitus ad aures,  
 Erigitur, meminitque sui, viresque peractas  
 Ingemit, et campis alios regnare leones.

*Theb. xi. 741.*

As in his rocky cave a Lion couch'd,  
 Whom in his prime the hills and forests round

Trembled

Trembled to hear, now stiff with sluggish age,  
 And all disarm'd, yet bears an awful front,  
 That scares beholders : if his flagging ears  
 Receive a distant roar, erects his head,  
 Thinks on past days, regrets his strength decay'd,  
 And groans that other lions rule the plain.

There is much true grandeur in this picture ;  
 and a happier image has perhaps never been  
 given of fallen royalty.

The dying lion is made by Silius Italicus a  
 comparison of the unfortunate consul Paulus  
 Æmilius, slain at Cannæ.

.....ceus, depulsis levioribus hastis  
 Accepit Leo quum tandem per pectora ferrum,  
 Stat teli patiens media tremebundus arena,  
 Ac manante jubis rictuque et naribus unda  
 Sanguinis, interdum languentia lumina torquens,  
 Effundit patulo spumantem ex ore cruorem.

*Lib. x. 242.*

As when a Lion, lighter darts repell'd,  
 Deep in his breast at length receives the spear,  
 Patient of steel with trembling limbs he stands,  
 While from his jaws and nostrils down his mane  
 Streams the red blood ; his languid eyeballs roll,  
 And life pours rushing in a foamy tide.

This picture is evidently drawn from the  
 amphitheatre, where the prodigious number of  
 wild beasts slaughtered for the amusement of  
 the Roman people gave opportunities for ob-

serving their manners and actions that no modern inhabitants of cities can possess.

The *Leopard* or *Panther* is once alone introduced by Homer as an object of comparison (*Il.* xxi. 573); and there is so little characteristic in the draught, that I shall not transcribe the passage.

I find a remarkable simile in Ariosto, in which the *Hunting Leopard* is introduced with much spirit and truth of representation. The two heroines, Bradamante and Marfisa, returning without success from the chase of king Agramante, are thus compared :

Come due belle e generose Parde,  
Che fuor del lasso sien di pari uscite,  
Poscia che i cervi, ò le capre gagliarde  
Indarno aver si veggano seguite,  
Vergognandosi quasi che fur tarde,  
Sdegnose sene tornano, e pentite :  
Così tornar le due donzelle, quando  
Videro il Pagan salvo, sospirando.

*Orl. Fur.* xxxix. 69.

As when two beauteous Pard of generous race  
Let slip at once, pursue the bounding stag  
Or nimble roe, but, thrown behind, return  
With self-accusing looks, ashamed and sad ;  
Thus measured back their steps the martial maids,  
The foe in safety left.

With

With the true *Tiger* Homer was probably unacquainted, and it is to the Latin poets that we must have recourse for the first notices of this formidable animal. Virgil, however, only affords a simple comparison, without description, of a Tiger amidst a flock of sheep, to Turnus having forced his way into the Trojan camp.

Lucan puts into the mouth of Cæsar a simile in which Pompey's alleged thirst of blood is compared to that of a Tiger.

Utque feræ Tigres nunquam posuere furorem,  
Quas nemore Hyrcano, matrum dum lustra sequuntur,  
Altus cæsorū pavit cruor armentorum ;  
Sic et Syllanum solito tibi lambere ferrum  
Durat, Magne, sitis. *Phars. i. 327.*

As Tigers fell, whom, in Hyrcanian wilds,  
Their cruel mother train'd to drink the gore  
Of slaughter'd kine, ne'er lose the savage taste :  
So, us'd to lick the bloody Syllan steel,  
Pompey, thy thirst remains unquench'd.

The untameable nature so generally attributed to this ferocious beast is the ground of the comparison.

Statius enlarges upon the characteristic fierceness of the tiger in the following simile, applied to Eteocles whom a horrid vision has inspired with fury against his brother.

Qualis ubi audito venantum murmure Tigris  
Horruit in maculas, somnosque excussit inertes ;

Bella

Bella cupit, laxatque genas, et temperat ungues ;  
Mox ruit in turmas, natisque alimenta cruentis  
Spirantem fert ore virum : sic excitus ira  
Ductor, in absentem consumit prælia fratrem.

*Theb. ii. 128.*

As when a Tigress at the hunter's cry  
Bursts into streaks, shakes off the drowsy mood,  
Rouses to war, prepares her teeth and claws,  
Then rushing on the troop, with bloody mouth  
A man yet breathing bears, her cubs' repast :  
Thus, fired with rage, the chief in combat burns  
Against his absent brother.

The circumstance of the streaks or spots of a tiger or leopard being rendered more conspicuous when the animal is enraged, is often alluded to by the poets, and is probably founded on observation. From the tremendous strength and fierceness attributed in the simile to the tigress, it may be supposed that the Romans were acquainted with the true Indian species.

The speed of a tiger in pursuit of the ravisher of its young was almost proverbial among the ancients, and has been described as well by naturalists as by poets. Silius Italicus adduces it as a comparison to the celerity with which Hannibal flew from Tarentum, upon intelligence of the danger to which Capua was exposed on an attack by the Romans.

Haud

Haud secus amisso Tigris si concita fœtu  
 Emicet, attonitæ paucis lustratur in horis  
 Caucasus, et saltu transmittitur alite Ganges,  
 Donec fulmineo partus vestigia cursu  
 Colligit, et rabiem preno consumit in hoste.

*Lib. xii. 458.*

Thus, of her young bereav'd, the Tigress flies  
 In maddening haste; and through Caucasian cliffs  
 In few short hours her rapid search pursued,  
 Wing'd with the lightning's speed o'er Ganges bounds,  
 Till falling on the track, her furious rage  
 She wreaks in vengeance on th' o'ertaken foe.

Milton, of whom we have long lost sight,  
 has ventured to apply his knowledge of the tiger's manner of seizing his prey in an original simile applied to Satan, intent on mischief, watching the actions of the human pair in Paradise.

Then as a Tiger, who by chance hath spy'd  
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,  
 Straight couches close, then rising changes oft  
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground  
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,  
 Griped in each paw.

*Par. L. iv. 403.*

This is a very picturesque scene, closely resembling that which it is brought to illustrate in its moral or sentimental character, in which alone a real likeness could consist to a creation of the fancy.

The

The *Wolf*, a more ignoble beast of prey, but one familiar to the observation of the rural inhabitants in Europe and Asia, and whose savage and predatory nature would suggest various fit comparisons for the incidents of warfare, has been introduced in the similes of Homer with the truth and spirit characteristic of that great poet. The following picture is genuine natural history :

..... As Wolves that gorge  
 Their prey yet panting, terrible in force,  
 When on the mountains wild they have devour'd  
 An antler'd stag new slain, with bloody jaws  
 Troop all at once to some clear fountain, there  
 To lap with slender tongue the brimming wave ;  
 No fears have they, but at their ease eject  
 From full maws flatulent the clotted gore ;  
 Such seem'd the Myrmidon heroic chiefs  
 Assembling fast around the valiant friend  
 Of swift Æacides.

*Il. xvi. 156. Cowper.*

Their hunting in troops, their ravenous manner of feeding, the form of their tongues and mode of drinking (not noticed in Pope's elaborate version of the passage), are circumstances that a Buffon would select in describing the animal. The application of the simile is but lax : since the Myrmidons have not yet been engaged in action, and only resemble the  
wolves



wolves by their collecting in a troop: but the poet probably meant by the comparison to inculcate an opinion of their peculiar ferocity.

Another natural painting derived from this animal is given by Homer where he describes the rout of the Trojans by the Greeks led by Patroclus:

Furious as hungry Wolves the kids assail,  
Or lambs, which haply some unheeding swain  
Hath left to roam at large the mountains wild;  
They, seeing, snatch them from beside the dams,  
And rend with ruthless haste the feeble prey;  
So swift the Danaï assail'd the host  
Of Ilium. *Il. xvi. 352. Cowper.*

The resemblance here intended consists not only in the fury of the assailants, but in the unresisting timidity of the prey.

Virgil affords three similes, not borrowed from Homer, but probably derived from his own observation, in which the manners and actions of wolves are represented in lively and natural colours. The first is an attack made by a troop of these foragers in a mist, compared to the nocturnal daring of a desperate band of Trojans during the sack of their city:

..... Inde Lupi ceu  
Raptores, atra in nebula, quos improba ventris  
Exegit cæcos rabies, catulique relictī

Faucibus

Faucibus expectant siccis; per tela, per hostes,  
Vadimus haud dubiam in mortem.

*Æn.* ii. 355.

Like ravening Wolves, when fogs obscure the day,  
Who, urged by furious hunger, and the cries  
Of tongue-parch'd cubs, expectant in their den,  
Rush headlong on the prey: through show'rs of darts  
And thronging foes we go to certain death.

Dryden's and Pitt's translations mistake the material circumstance "atra in nebula," which they represent rather as a storm than "a dark fog."

Turnus, attempting to break into the Trojan camp, and eagerly trying every accessible part, is very happily paralleled in the following lines:

Ac veluti pleno lupus insidiatus ovili,  
Cum fremit ad caulas, ventos perpressus et imbres,  
Nocte super media; tuti sub matribus agni  
Balatum exercent; ille asper et improbus ira  
Sævit in absentes: collecta fatigat edendi  
Ex longo rabies, et siccæ sanguine fauces:  
Haud aliter Rutulo, muros et castra tuenti,  
Ignescunt iræ.

*Æn.* ix. 59.

As, beat by tempests, and by famine bold,  
The prowling Wolf attempts the nightly fold;  
Lodged in the guarded field beneath their dams,  
Safe from the savage, bleat the tender lambs:  
The monster meditates the fleecy brood;  
Now howls with hunger, and now thirsts for blood;

Roams

Roams round the fences that the prize contain,  
 And madly rages at the flock in vain :  
 Thus, as th' embattled towers the chief descries,  
 Rage fires his soul and flashes from his eyes.

*Pitt.*

The impotent fury of the assailant, and the security of the Trojans within their fortification, could scarcely, in all the range of nature, have been imaged in a more appropriate comparison. It will hardly be necessary to apprize even the mere English reader, that Virgil is not answerable for the absurd appellation of "the monster."

A trait of character in the wolf has suggested to Virgil a simile applied to the cowardly Aruns, who, after having mortally wounded Camilla with his javelin, shrinks back in affright at his own deed.

Ac velut ille, prius quam tela inimica sequantur,  
 Continuo in montes sese avius abdidit altos,  
 Occiso pastore lupus, magnove juvenco,  
 Conscius audacis facti, caudamque remulcens  
 Subjecit pavitantem utero, sylvasque petivit.

*Æn.* xi. 809.

As when a prowling Wolf, whose rage has slain  
 Some stately heifer, or the guardian swain,  
 Flies to the mountain with impetuous speed,  
 Confused, and conscious of the daring deed,  
 Claps close his quivering tail between his thighs  
 Ere yet the peopled country round him rise.

*Pitt.*

It

It is but justice to mention that the vigorous expression of the last line but one in the translation, which so well renders the original, is copied from Dryden.

Statius, in an imitation of this simile (*Theb.* iv. 363), with more probability supposes the wolf to have perpetrated the slaughter only of the fairest of the flock ("pecus,"); for it is very rare for a single animal of this species to attack a full-grown heifer, and still rarer, a man.

Tasso, as a comparison for the fierce Solimano compelled reluctantly to quit the field which he has heaped with slain, represents a wolf driven from the fold after gorging himself with prey, but still thirsting for blood. The picture is strongly drawn, and well applied.

Come dal chiuso ovil cacciato viene  
Lupo tal'hor, che fugge, e si nasconde;  
Che, se ben del gran ventre homai ripiene  
Ha l'ingorde voragine profonde;  
Avido pur di sangue, anco fuor tiene  
La lingua, e'l sugge da le labra immonde;  
Tale ei sen già dopo il sanguigno stratio,  
De la sua cupa fame anco non satio.

*Gerus. Lib. x. 2.*

As, hunted from the plunder'd fold, a Wolf  
For safety flies, and seeks his dark retreat,  
When, though the spacious cavern of his maw  
Be full distent, yet, greedy still of blood,

He

He lolls his tongue, and licks his jaws impure :

So, from the sanguine carnage of the field,

Insatiate still, the Soldan fierce withdrew.

Milton, in making the wolf an object of comparison, could only paint from fancy ; the description, however, in the following simile is new, and the resemblance is exact. It is applied to Satan leaping with a bound over the wall of Paradise.

..... As when a prowling Wolf  
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve  
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,  
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold.

*Par. L. iv. 183.*

It is here observable that the poet has dwelt chiefly on that part of the description with the subject of which he was personally acquainted—the manner of forming sheep-folds.

The *Bear* is an animal seldom mentioned by the ancient poets, and not at all, as far as I have examined, in the way of comparison. Both Tasso and Ariosto, however, have introduced him in similes with some characteristic circumstances. The former poet gives the following image of the rage of Argante after receiving a wound :

Qual ne l'alpestri selve Orsa, che senta  
Duro spiedo nel fianco, in rabbia monta,

*E contra*

E contra l'arme se medesima avventa,  
 E i perigli, e la morte audace affronta :  
 Tale il Circasso indomito diventa.

*Ger. Lib. vi. 45.*

As the She-Bear, in alpine forests chas'd,  
 When feeling in her side the spear, arous'd  
 To madd'ning fury, rushes on the foe,  
 Careless of wounds or death : the Pagan thus  
 Burst into fiery wrath.

Though it is the nature of several ferocious animals to become more furious on being wounded, yet the bear is peculiarly distinguished by his blind and obstinate rage on that occasion. This stupidity or irrationality of passion is exemplified by Ariosto, in a simile applied to Rodomonte, when violently struggling with the mad Orlando upon a bridge.

Simiglia Rodomonte intorno a Orlando  
 Lo stolido Orso, che sveller si crede  
 L'arbore onde e caduto ; e come n'abbia  
 Quello ogni colpa, odio gli posta, e rabbia.

*Orl. Fur. xxix. 46.*

Fierce Rodomonte round Orlando clung,  
 Like to the stupid Bear, who strives t' uproot  
 The tree from which he fell, and vents his rage  
 On the unfeeling trunk, his fancied foe.

The force of instinct, which seems so predominant in this creature, is, however, truly interesting as it is shown in that fervent attachment

ment to its young which so remarkably characterizes the she-bear. This is very beautifully described by the same poet, in a simile where it is made the parallel to the zeal of Medoro in protecting the dead body of his king.

Come Orsa, che l'alpestre cacciatore  
Nella pietrosa tana assalit' abbia,  
Sta sopra i figli con incerto core,  
E freme in sono di pietà, e di rabbia :  
Ira l'invita, e natural furore  
A spiegar l'unghie, e a insanguinar le labbia ;  
Amor l'intenerisce, e la ritira  
A riguardar a i figli in mezzo l'ira.

*Orl. Fur. xix. 7.*

As the She-Bear within her rocky den  
Assail'd by mountain hunters, o'er her cubs  
Hangs dubious, growling now in pity's tone,  
Now with fierce menace ; rage and savage heat  
Urge her to rush abroad and tear the foe  
With claws and teeth ; but love maternal soothes  
Her wrathful mood, and brings her back to gaze  
Upon her helpless young.

The truth of this picture will not be questioned by those who recollect the pathetic narrative of the slaughter of a polar bear and her cubs, in Phipps's "Voyage towards the North Pole."

The *Wild-Boar*, though not properly a predatory

datory animal, possesses sufficient strength and ferocity to become a formidable foe when provoked; and from the earliest times his chase has been a scene of dangerous enterprise. Savage, and armed with a desperate weapon, he is mischievous enough to afford an apt comparison for the rude warriors of the heroic ages; and Homer has twice made the boar the subject of a simile, in which he has happily exercised his singular talent for natural description. Idomeneus, waiting the attack of Æneas, is thus resembled:

As in the mountains, conscious of his force,  
The Wild-boar waits a coming multitude  
Of boist'rous hunters to his lone retreat;  
Arching his bristly spine he stands, his eyes  
Beam fire, and whetting his bright tusks, he burns  
To drive, not dogs alone, but men to flight:  
So stood the royal Cretan.

*Il. xiii. 471. Cowper.*

The attitude and expression of the animal preparing for the combat are painted with great force; but the application of the comparison is not exact, since Idomeneus is waiting the assault of a single foe, which he dreads so much, that he calls loudly upon his friends for aid.

In the other example, the boar, completely surrounded



surrounded by his enemies, represents with greater accuracy the condition of Ulysses, left alone in the field amid a host of Trojans.

..... As when dogs, and swains  
In prime of manhood, from all quarters rush  
Around a Boar, he bolts from his retreat,  
The bright tusk whetting in his crooked jaws;  
They press him on all sides, and from beneath  
Loud gnashings hear, yet, firm, his threats defy;  
Like them the Trojans on all sides assail'd  
Ulysses, dear to Jove.

*Il. xi. 414. Cowper.*

Virgil, in imitating these similes, has employed all his poetical skill to improve the picture by new touches, and in particular has localized his scene, and added circumstances taken from the boar-chase as he himself had probably witnessed it. The animal is the counterpart of Mezentius raging amidst his deadly foes.

Ac velut ille canum morsu de montibus altis  
Actus aper, multos Vesulus quem pinifer annos  
Defendit, multosve palus Laurentia, silva  
Pastus arundinea, postquam inter retia ventum est,  
Substitit, infrenuitque ferox, et inhorruit armos;  
Nec cuiquam irasci propriusve accedere virtus,  
Sed jaculis tutisque procul clamoribus instant:  
Ille autem impavidus partes cunctatur in omnes,  
Dentibus infrendens, et tergo decutit hastas:  
Haud aliter, justæ quibus est Mezentius iræ,  
Non ulli est animus stricto concurrere ferro;  
Missilibus longe et vasto clamore lacesant.

*Æn. x. 707.*

The translations of this passage both by Dryden and Pitt are so loose and inaccurate, that I find it necessary to attempt one of my own, which may at least more faithfully represent the original.

As, chas'd by eager dogs, a mighty Boar,  
Whom piny Vesulus has long conceal'd,  
Who long has fed amid Laurentian reeds,  
Driv'n from the mountains, when the meshy toils  
Arrest his flight, stops short, and fiercely snorts,  
And bristles up his back ; the hunter train  
Dread to approach, but distant press him round  
With darts, and idle shouts : he, void of fear,  
Lingers in every part, and grinds his tusks,  
And shakes the javelins from his brawny sides :  
Thus, gathering round the tyrant king, though urg'd  
By righteous hate, none dares to prove his arm,  
But, clamouring loud, they wage a missile war.

## X.

### FROM THE BULL, HORSE, AND OTHER QUADRUPEDS.

That stately animal the *Bull* is scarcely introduced by Homer otherwise than as the prey of the lion, or the victim of sacrifice; probably on account of the inferior size of the beeve kind in the countries with which he was conversant. He has, indeed, briefly compared the dignity of Agamemnon at the head of the Grecian army,  
to

to the distinction with which a bull appears as leader of the herd (*Il. ii. 480*); but he no where considers him under his martial or pugnacious character.

Virgil, however, who had taken his ideas of the horned tribe from the noble races in the rich Italian pastures, describes the bull, both directly in the *Georgics*, and allusively in the *Æneid*, as an enraged and formidable combatant. He is thus exhibited as a comparison to Turnus impatiently preparing for the final conflict with *Æneas*:

Mugitus veluti cum prima in prælia Taurus  
Terrificos ciet, atque irasci in cornua tentat,  
Arboris obnixus trunco, ventosque lacessit  
Ictibus, et sparsa ad pugnam proludit arena.

*Æn. xii. 103.*

So the fierce Bull, collected in his might,  
Roars for his rival, and demands the fight;  
Impatient for the war, with fury burns,  
And tries on every tree his angry horns;  
Bends his stern brows, and pushes at the air,  
And paws the flying sands, the prelude of the war.

*Pitt.*

The resemblance, indeed, is not very happy; for Turnus was so far from entering on his "first battle," that he was already the most distinguished warrior of his country. The poet re-

peats the simile with more pomp and circumstance when the two great rivals are actually engaged :

Ac velut, ingenti Sila summove Taburno,  
 Cum duo conversis inimica in prælia Tauri  
 Frontibus incurrunt, pavidì cessere magistri ;  
 Stat pecus omne metu mutum, mussantque juvencæ,  
 Quis pecori imperitet, quem tota armenta sequantur :  
 Illi inter sese multa vi volnera miscent,  
 Cornuaque obnixa infigunt, et sanguine largo  
 Colla armosque lavant ; gemitu nemus omne remugit :  
 Haud aliter Tros Æneas et Daunius heros  
 Concurrunt clypeis. *Æn.* xii. 715.

As where proud Sila's towering summits rise,  
 Or huge Taburnus heaves into the skies,  
 With frowning fronts two mighty Bulls engage ;  
 A dreadful war the bellowing rivals wage :  
 Far from the scene the trembling keepers fly ;  
 Struck dumb with terror stand the heifers by,  
 Nor know which lord the subject herds shall lead,  
 And reign at large, the monarch of the mead :  
 Fierce strokes they aim, repeated o'er and o'er ;  
 Their dewlaps, necks, and sides are bathed in gore ;  
 The mountains, streams, and woods rebellow to the roar. }  
 So to the fight the furious heroes fly,  
 So clash their shields, and echo to the sky.

*Pitt.*

This is a truly splendid description ; and the application of the simile to the chiefs, who were contending both for dominion and the possession of Lavinia, is accurately just.

These

These passages, and more especially the description of the rival bulls in the *Georgics*, where the vanquished retires to solitude till he has recruited his strength, and then returns to try a second encounter, have been imitated by Lucan and Statius, but with little novelty of circumstance.

Silius Italicus has a simile in which both the bull and the lion are introduced, the former with peculiar distinction, and each with such appropriate action as to compose a striking picture. A warrior hesitating on the near survey of a powerful antagonist is thus compared :

Haud secus e specula præceps delatus opaca  
 Subsicens campo submissos contrahit artus  
 Quum vicina trucidis conspexit cornua Tauri,  
 Quamvis longa fames stimulet, Leo : nunc ferus alta  
 Surgentes cervice toros, nunc torva sub hirta  
 Lumina miratur fronte, ac jam signa moventem,  
 Et sparsa pugnæ meditantem spectat arena.

*Lib. v. 310.*

Thus, headlong from his gloomy covert borne,  
 By raging hunger urg'd, the Lion stops,  
 And crouching low to earth contracts his limbs,  
 When full before him stands the surly Bull.  
 Wond'ring the savage marks his sinewy neck  
 That swells with ire ; beneath his shaggy front  
 Two flaming eyes ; and sees him fiercely spurn  
 The scatter'd sand, preluding to the fight.

The

The characteristic attitude of the lion watching when to make his spring, and the signs of defiance exhibited by the bull, are sketched with singular truth and spirit.

The pastime of bull-baiting, common to many countries, however repugnant to humanity, has supplied Ariosto with a simile happily illustrative of the rout and carnage effected by the terrible Rodomonte when shut up and surrounded in Paris.

Chi ha visto in piazza rompere steccato,  
A cui la folta turba ondeggi intorno,  
Immansueto toro accaneggiato,  
Stimolato e percosso tutto il giorno,  
Che'l popol se ne fugge spaventato,  
Ed egli or questo, or quel leva su'l corno;  
Pensi che tale o piu terribil fosse  
Il crudele African, quando si mosse.

*Orl. Fur.* xviii. 19.

He who has seen, encircled by the throng  
Close-wedg'd that waves around, a savage Bull  
Whom blows and goads have madden'd all the day,  
Break loose, and charge among the flying rout,  
While from his tossing horns now this, now that,  
Mounts into air; may view in fancy's eye  
The cruel Pagan spreading dire dismay  
Where'er he moved.

The same fertile poet, who, in his motley work, is more solicitous to entertain his readers with

with the variety and animation of his draughts, than to preserve the epic dignity, gives a kind of tragi-comic description of the mad Orlando's seizure by his friends, in which he represents him as enabled by his amazing strength to run off with a number of them hanging upon him. This incident suggests a comparison drawn from a similar source with the preceding.

Chi ha visto toro, a cui si dia la caccia,  
 E ch'alle orecchie abbia le zanne fiere,  
 Correr mugghiando, e trarre ovunque corre  
 I cani seco, e non potersi sciorre ;  
 Immagini ch' Orlando fosse tale,  
 Che tutti quei guerrier seco traea.

*Orl. Fur. xxxix. 52.*

As when a hunted Bull, that feels the fangs  
 Deep in his ears infix'd, runs bellowing on,  
 And with him bears the dogs that keep their hold  
 Not to be shaken off ; Orlando thus  
 Ran with the warriors pendent at his sides.

Homer's accurate observation of the incidents of rural nature has supplied him with a simile taken from the females and young of this species, which presents a pleasing picture. When Ulysses in the island of Circe returns to his ship, the crew of which were lamenting him as lost, their affectionate joy at the sight of him is thus resembled :

As when the calves within some village rear'd  
 Behold at eve the herd returning home  
 From fruitful meads, where they have grazed their fill ;  
 Forth rushing from the stall, they blare and sport  
 Around their mothers with a ceaseless joy :  
 Such joy, at sight of me, dissolv'd in tears  
 My grateful friends.

*Odys. x. 410. Cowper.*

To have been impressed by such a circumstance displays no less a feeling heart than an attentive eye.

Courage without ferocity, strength, speed, and gracefulness of form, distinguish that noblest of domestic animals, the *Horse*, which, ever since his association with man, has been his prime favourite. From a very early period he became the subject of poetical description, as appears from the spirited picture of the war-horse in the Book of Job ; and there are many passages in Homer which show the value placed upon the generous steeds that drew the chariots of kings and heroes. One of the most beautiful similes in this poet gives a description of this fine creature in all the pride and rapture of recovered freedom.

As some stall'd Horse high-pamper'd, snapping short  
 His cord, beats under-feet the sounding soil,  
 Accustom'd in smooth-sliding streams to lave  
 Exulting : high he bears his head ; his mane

*Wanton.*



Wantons around his shoulders ; pleased he eyes  
His glossy sides ; and borne on pliant knees  
Soon finds the haunts where all his fellows graze :  
So, clad in sun-bright arms, from Ilium's heights  
Down flew the joyful Paris.

*Il. vi. 506. Cowper.*

The application to Paris going to battle seems void of peculiar propriety with respect to *action* ; but the critics have found that the *person* of that gay and *gallant* hero is very happily represented by a sleek and high-bred stallion, whom they suppose impatient to revisit his females in the pasture, though the Greek intimates nothing of the sex of his companions. That Homer, however, had such a moral resemblance in his view, is rendered improbable, by the repetition of the simile in the identical words, on the occasion of Hector's returning to the field after he had been wounded by Ajax. In fact, the picture is to be regarded as a mere ornament ; and such it is, of the most exquisite kind.

Virgil, in adopting this simile, has given so close a translation of the Greek, without any addition to the description, that I forbear to transcribe it. The application is to Turnus, whom, in Heyne's opinion, the parallel better suits

suits than either of the Grecian chiefs, on account of the great alacrity with which he is represented as rushing to battle.

A comparison better adapted to martial scenery is found in various poets, derived from the effect of the wonted sound of the trumpet upon a war-horse. This is described by Ovid in two energetic lines, the application of which is to Pentheus inflamed to rage by hearing the clamour of the Bacchanals.

Ut fremit acer Equus, cum bellicus ære canoro  
Signa dedit tubicen, pugnæque assumit amorem.

*Metam. iii. 704.*

As snorts the fiery Steed, when breath'd through brass  
The wonted signal of the fight he hears,  
That wakes his soul to war.

Valerius Flaccus (*Argon. ii. 385.*) touches on the same comparison; but it is more opened, and applied with more felicity, by Tasso, where he describes the two deputed warriors suddenly presenting themselves richly armed before Rinaldo in the enchanted garden of Armida.

Qual feroce destrier' ch'al faticoso  
Honor de l'arme vincitor sia tolto;  
E lascivo marito in vil riposo  
Fra gli armenti, e ne' paschi erri disciolto;  
Se'l desta o suon di tromba, o luminoso  
Acciar, colà tosto annitrendo è volto:

Gia gia brama l'arringo, e l'huom su'l dorso  
 Portando urtato riurtar nel corso.

*Ger. Lib. xvi. 28.*

As when from martial toil the generous Steed  
 Releas'd, is giv'n to range the verdant mead,  
 Forgetful of his former fame, he roves,  
 And wooes in slothful ease his dappled loves :  
 If chance the trumpet's sound invades his ears,  
 Or glittering steel before his sight appears,  
 He neighs aloud, and furious pants to bear  
 The valiant chief, and pierce the files of war.

*Hoole.*

The resemblance is here rendered very complete by the supposition that the charger was become, like the enamoured knight, "lascivo marito."

The impatience of a courser to start for the race, still more excited by the shouts of the surrounding crowd, affords Lucan an apt comparison to Cæsar's ardour for civil war, inflamed by the eloquent exhortation of Curio.

..... ipsi  
 In bellum prono tantum tamen addidit iræ,  
 Accenditque ducem, quantum clamore juvatur  
 Eleus sonipes, quamvis jam carcere clauso  
 Immineat foribus, pronusque repagula laxet.

*Phars. i. 292.*

Not peals of loud applause with greater force  
 At Grecian Elis rouse the fiery Horse,  
 When eager for the course each nerve he strains,  
 Hangs on the bit, and tugs the stubborn reins,

*At*

At every shout erects his quivering ears,  
And his broad breast upon the barrier bears.

*Rowe.*

The bounding motion of the horses which drew, four abreast, the ancient light chariot has served Homer for a lively parallel to a galley darting forward at every stroke of the oars.

She, [the vessel] as four harness'd stallions o'er the plain  
Shooting together at the scourge's stroke,  
Toss high their manes, and rapid scour along ;  
So mounted she the waves.

*Odys. xiii. 81.*

The image of a chariot flying at the full speed of the horses, over which the driver has lost all control, is employed by Virgil to designate the state of general war that agitated the Roman world at the time of his composing the *Georgics*.

..... sævit toto Mars impius orbe :  
Ut cum carceribus sese effudere quadrigæ,  
Addunt in spatia ; et frustra retinacula tendens  
Fertur equis auriga, neque audit currus habenas.

*Georg. i. 511.*

So four fierce coursers starting to the race  
Scour through the plain, and lengthen every pace ;  
Nor reins, nor curbs, nor threat'ning cries they hear,  
But force along the trembling charioteer.

*Dryden.*

This simile is rather of the ingenious than the obvious kind, the true point of resemblance consisting

consisting in the inability of a ruler to restrain the hostile fury of the people, compared to that of a charioteer to check the career of high-met-tled horses.

The indifference of the ancient Greek bard in the choice of his objects of comparison, provided they suited the immediate purpose for which they were adduced, is remarkably displayed in a simile of the *Iliad*, immediately following that in which Ajax, unwillingly retreating from the assault of the combined Trojans, is with much dignity resembled to a lion repelled from the stalls. Wishing still further to exemplify the perseverance of this hero, and the difficulty with which he was compelled to retire from the unequal combat, the poet does not scruple to give him a representative in the *Ass*; an animal which, where the horse was known, must at all times have been regarded in the same light of relative inferiority that he is at present; and which, in fact, is in this passage characterized by those qualities of sluggishness, insensibility, and voracity, that in our idea most degrade his nature. There seems, therefore, to be no foundation for the gloss of critics, who, attempting to palliate this want of refinement in Homer (characteristic of the  
simplicity

simplicity of the age in which he lived,) insinuate that the Ass was considered at that time as occupying a more respectable rank than is now allotted him. The simile is thus translated by Cowper :

As when (the boys o'erpower'd) a sluggish Ass,  
Whose tough sides erst have shiver'd many a staff,  
Enters the harvest, and the spiry ears  
Crops persevering ; with their rods the boys  
Still ply him hard, but all their puny might  
Scarce drives him forth when he hath browsed his fill :  
So, there, the Trojans and their foreign aids  
With glittering lances keen huge Ajax urged.

*Il. xi. 557.*

The translator chooses to suppose that the animal's sides have been previously rendered so callous by the use of the cudgel, that he can scarcely feel the trifling discipline of the boys : but in the original the same word is employed, which he renders first *staff* and then *rod*. The comparison fully exemplifies the quality of *patient endurance*, which alone it was intended to illustrate.

That ancient and faithful servant of man, the *Dog*, has often attracted poetical notice, especially as his associate in the chase, an employment highly interesting in itself, and affording a lively image of war. His sagacity and perseverance

severance in the pursuit, and spirit in the attack, offer a parallel to the exertion of the same qualities in the human combatant, which has frequently been the subject of simile. Thus Hector, pressing close on the rear of the flying Greeks, is resembled to a dog keenly following a retreating wild beast.

As when a Hound, confiding in his speed,  
His fangs oft fastens on the flank or haunch  
Of boar or lion, and with watchful eye  
Observes him turning; so the Trojan chief  
Hung on the flying Greeks, and slew at times  
The hindmost fugitive. *Il. viii. 338.*

It has been remarked that the partiality of Homer for his countrymen has here led him to compare the Greeks, though in flight, to the nobler animal, at the expense of the similitude. He has repeated the same image with some variation, and applied it more judiciously, where he compares the throng of Trojans following the retreating Ajaxes to a pack of hounds pursuing a wild-boar.

..... As Hounds before a band  
Of youthful hunters, on the wounded boar  
Make fierce assault; awhile at utmost speed  
They stretch toward him, hungering for the prey,  
But oft as, turning suddenly, the brawn  
Withstands them, scatter'd on all sides escape:  
The Trojans so, thick thronging in the rear,  
Annoy'd them sore. *Il. xvii. 725. Cowper.*

The

The chase of Hector round the walls of Troy by Achilles gives rise to a simile, certainly not of the aggrandizing kind, but sufficiently exact in the parallel, in which the action of a hunting-dog is naturally represented :

..... As among the mountain-heights  
The Hound pursues, roused newly from her lair,  
The flying fawn through many a vale and grove,  
And though she trembling skulk the shrubs beneath,  
Her track unravels till he find the prey :  
So 'scaped not Hector Peleus' rapid son.

*Il. xxii. 189. Cowper.*

The same comparison is employed when Diomed and Ulysses in their nocturnal expedition give chase to Dolon.

Virgil, who has imitated Homer in concluding the contest between his rival heroes, Æneas and Turnus, with a flight and chase, also adopts the scene by which it is paralleled, but with circumstances descriptive of a stag-hunt as conducted in his own country.

Inclusum veluti si quando flumine nactus  
Cervum, aut puniceæ septum formidine pennæ,  
Venator cursu canis et latratibus instat ;  
Ille autem, insidiis et ripa territus alta,  
Mille fugit refugitque vias : at vividus Umber  
Hæret hians, jam jamque tenet, similisque tenenti  
Increpuit malis, morsuque elusus inani est.

*Æn. xii. 749.*

As



As the fleet Stag, by the staunch Hound pursued,  
 Now bounds above the banks, now shoots along the flood,  
 Now from the meshy toils with terror springs,  
 Scared by the plumes that dance upon the strings;  
 He starts, he pants, he stares with wild amaze,  
 And flies his opening foe a thousand ways;  
 Close at his heels the deep-mouth'd furious Hound  
 Turns as he turns, and traces all the ground:  
 On his full stretch he makes his eager way,  
 And holds, or thinks he holds, the trembling prey.  
 Forth darts the Stag: his foe cast far behind  
 Catches but empty air, and bites the wind.

*Pitt.*

Ovid has given a very lively description of a greyhound coursing a hare, in a simile which he applies to the pursuit of Daphne by the enamoured Apollo: the diction, though not the scene, is evidently imitated from Virgil.

Ut Canis in vacuo Leporem cum Gallicus arvo  
 Vidit, et hic prædam pedibus petit, ille salutem;  
 Alter inhæsuro similis, jam jamque tenere  
 Sperat, et extento stringit vestigia rostro:  
 Alter in ambiguo est an sit deprensus, et ipsis  
 Morsibus eripitur, tangentialque ora relinquit:  
 Sic Deus et Virgo est; hic spe celer, illa timore.

*Metam.* i. 533.

As when a Greyhound on the open plain  
 Espies a Hare; they start, and trust in speed  
 One for his prey, the other for her life;  
 He, just in act to seize, with outstretch'd jaw  
 Presses her steps, and seems to hold the prize:

L

She,

She, doubtful whether yet untaken, springs  
 Close from his touch, and cheats his snapping teeth :  
 So fare the God and Maid ; he wing'd with hope,  
 And she with fear.

To this picture I cannot forbear to subjoin one from Dryden's "Annus Mirabilis," in which he carries on the same match between the hound and the hare to a later period, introducing it as a comparison to the Prince's disabled ship in his sea-fight with the Dutch, lying by two of the enemy's, which she has also disabled :

So have I seen some fearful Hare maintain  
 A course, till tired before the Dog she lay ;  
 Who, stretch'd behind her, pants upon the plain,  
 Past power to kill, as she to get away :  
 With his loll'd tongue he faintly licks his prey ;  
 His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies ;  
 She, trembling, creeps upon the ground away,  
 And looks back to him with beseeching eyes.

The return of hounds from a fruitless chase has afforded Tasso a short but expressive simile, applied to the warriors who had lost the traces of the fugitive Erminia.

Qual dopo lunga e faticosa caccia  
 Tornansi mesti ed anhelanti i Cani,  
 Che la fera perduta habbian di traccia,  
 Nascosa in selva da gli aperti piani :

Tal,

Tal, pieni d'ira e di vergogna in faccia  
Riedono stanchi i Cavalier Christiani.

*Ger. Lib. vii. 2.*

As, after long and toilsome chase in vain  
The panting Dogs unwilling quit the plain,  
If chance the game their eager search elude,  
Conceal'd in shelter of the fav'ring wood :  
So to the camp the Christian Knights return,  
While rage and shame in every visage burn.

*Hoole.*

Ariosto, who has been already mentioned as little nice in the choice of his similes, but who describes with great force and nature, compares very aptly, though rather ignobly, the encounter of two adverse knights, to that of two quarrelsome Dogs :

Come soglion talor duo Can mordenti,  
O per invidia, o per altro odio mossi,  
Avvicinarsi, digrignando i denti,  
Con occhi biechi, e piu che bragia rossi ;  
Indi a morsi venir, di rabbia ardenti,  
Con aspri ringhi e rabuffati dossi :  
Cosi alle spadi, dai gridi, e dall' onte ;  
Venne il Circasso e quel di Chiaramonte.

*Orl. Fur. ii. 5.*

As when two Dogs of canker'd kind approach,  
By hate or envy moved, with grinning teeth,  
And scowling eyes that glow like coals of fire ;  
To fury roused, they arch their bristling backs,  
And snarling rush to fight : the warriors thus  
From taunting words and cries proceed to blows.

Not less vigorous in description, nor more elevated in subject, is the simile which he employs in relating the final combat between Ruggiero and Rodomonte, when the former has the latter on the ground under him :

Come Mastin sotto il feroce Alano,  
 Che fissi i denti nella gola gli abbia,  
 Molto s'affanna, e si dibatte in vano  
 Con occhi ardenti, e con spumose labbia ;  
 E non puo uscire al predator in mano,  
 Che vince di vigor, non già di rabbia :  
 Così falla al Pagano ogni pensiero  
 D'uscir di sotto al vincitor Ruggiero.

*Orl. Fur.* xlv. 138.

As lies a Mastiff prostrate in the grasp  
 Of a fierce Wolf-dog, whose tenacious fangs  
 Close gripe his throat ; and heaves and struggles hard,  
 With eyes on fire, and jaws distain'd with foam,  
 In vain—no efforts can the foe elude,  
 His overmatch in force, though not in rage :  
 Thus vainly did the Pagan strain and toil  
 Beneath the victor chief.

In all pictures of the chase, both the chaser and the prey are subjects of interest; and when the scene is introduced as a simile, the principal resemblance may be directed either to the one or the other. Among the wild and timid animals which are the object of pursuit, none are so conspicuous as those of the *Stag* kind;  
 and

and we accordingly find them in various comparative pictures made the leading figures on the canvass. Thus, in the *Iliad*, when Agamemnon slays two of Priam's sons, none of the Trojans daring to give them succour, the action is thus paralleled :

As with resistless fangs the Lion breaks  
The tender offspring of the nimble Hind,  
Ent'ring her lair, and takes their feeble lives ;  
She, though at hand, can yield them no defence,  
But through the thick wood, wing'd with terror, starts  
Herself away, trembling at such a foe :  
So them no Trojan there had pow'r to save,  
Self-saving flight the sole concern of all.

*Il. xi. 113. Cowper.*

In the application of this simile we want the counterpart of the *mother* of the young victims, who is the most interesting figure in the accessory scene.

Statius, who, in his description of a foot-race, has introduced the simile of stags flying from a lion, adds a circumstance so truly poetical that the lines on that account only deserve transcription :

Non aliter celeres Hircania per avia Cervi,  
Cum procul impasti fremitum accepere Leonis,  
Sive putant, rapit attonitos fuga cæca, metusque  
Congregat, et longum dant cornua mixta fragorem.

*Theb. vi. 598.*

Thus,

Thus, in Hyrcanian wilds, a herd of Stags,  
 That hear, or seem to hear, the dreadful roar  
 Of some ghaunt Lion; swift they scour away,  
 With terror blind, and, mingling in a throng,  
 Their clashing antlers echo from afar.

A more striking image of danger could scarcely be conceived than that presented in a simile in the *Odyssey* put into the mouth of Menelaus, after he has been informed by Telemachus of the proceedings of his mother's suitors. "They wish (says he) to lay themselves in the couch of a man much braver than themselves:"

But as it chances, when the Hind hath lay'd  
 Her fawns, new-yeen'd, and sucklings yet, to rest  
 Within some dreadful Lion's gloomy den;  
 She roams the hills, and in the grassy vales  
 Feeds heedless, till the Lion, to his lair  
 Returning, rends them both; with such a force  
 Resistless shall Ulysses them destroy.

*Odys. iv. 335. Couper.*

The *bed* of Ulysses, compared to the *den* of the lion, constitutes the point of the similitude.

The timidity of the Fawn has afforded Horace a simile addressed to the young Chloe (*Ode 23. l. i.*), which is too familiar to all classic readers to need quotation. It was evidently in the eye of Ariosto when he applied to Angelica, flying from the pursuit of Rinaldo, the following simile:

Qual

Qual pargoletta Damma, o Capriola,  
 Che tra le frondi del natio boschetto  
 Alla madre veduto abbia la gola  
 Stringer dal Pardo, e aprir il fianco, o il petto,  
 Di selva in selva dal crudel s'involà,  
 E di paura trema, e di sospetto ;  
 Ad ogni sterpo che passando tocca  
 Esser si crede all' empia fera in bocca.

*Orl. Fur. i. 34.*

Thus when a tender Fawn of Hind or Roe  
 Within the cover of her native grove  
 Has seen her dam a cruel Leopard's prey,  
 With throat all torn, and sides in blood imbrued ;  
 From wood to wood the little trembler flies,  
 With terror at her heart, and, every bush  
 She passing touches, feels the savage jaws  
 Close at her flank.

“As the Hart panteth after the water-brook,”  
 says the Psalmist in a short comparison ; which  
 perhaps may have suggested to Tasso the simile  
 which he introduces where Erminia, led by  
 love towards the Christian encampment, is sud-  
 denly alarmed by the attack of one who sup-  
 posed her to be Clorinda, in whose armour she  
 was clad :

Si come Cerva, ch'assetata il passo  
 Mova a cercar d'acque lucenti e vive  
 Ove un bel fonte distillar da un sasso,  
 O vide un fiume tra frondose rive ;  
 S'incontra i Cani al hora, che'l corpo lasso  
 Ristorar crede a l'onde, a l'ombre estive,

Volge

Volge indietro fuggendo ; e la paura  
La stanchezza obliar face, e l'arsura.

*Ger. Lib. vi. 109.*

The Hind thus led by parching thirst to seek  
The clear and living streams, that gushing forth  
Flow from a rock, or roll, a lucid rill,  
Green banks between ; if, when her wearied limbs  
She thinks to lave and rest beneath the shade,  
The Hounds appear in view, in wild affright  
She bursts away, fatigue and thirst forgot.

I shall add one simile from Virgil, in which  
a wounded Hind is made the comparison to one  
labouring under a mental malady. The appli-  
cation is to the unfortunate Dido.

Uritur infelix Dido, totaque vagatur  
Urbe furens : qualis conjecta Cerva sagitta,  
Quam procul incautam nemora inter Cressia fixit  
Pastor agens telis, liquitque volatile ferrum  
Nescius : illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat  
Dictæos ; hæret lateri lethalis arundo.

*Æn. iv. 68.*

Sick with desire, and seeking him she loves,  
From street to street the raving Dido roves.  
So when the watchful shepherd from the blind  
Wounds with a random shaft the careless Hind,  
Distracted with her pain she flies the woods,  
Bounds o'er the lawn, and seeks the silent floods ;  
With fruitless care ; for still the fatal dart  
Sticks in her side, and rankles in her heart.

*Dryden.*

There is much exactness of parallel in this  
passage :



passage: the archer wounding *unconsciously* ("nescius") the *incautious* hind, who wanders about restless with the mortal shaft fixed in her side, very accurately represents the circumstances of the unhappy connexion between the Trojan chief and the Tyrian princess.

## XI.

### FROM BIRDS.

This class of animated beings, like the former, affords the varieties of the predaceous, the wild, and the domestic, and presents many objects to the poet applicable to the purposes of simile. In general, the pictures derived from the actions of birds are peculiarly lively and agreeable; and coming less under common observation than those of quadrupeds, they are more productive of novelty. The rapacious species will take the lead under this head, as under the former; and in like manner we shall begin with that which has been termed the king of its kind.

Homer several times introduces the *Eagle* as an object of comparison, but not often with any minuteness of description. The acuteness of his sight is the circumstance of resemblance in  
the

the following simile. Menelaus explores the field of battle

..... with an eye  
Keen as an Eagle's, keenest-eyed of all  
That wing the air, whom, though he soar aloft,  
The lev'ret 'scapes not hid in thickest shades,  
But down he stoops, and at a stroke she dies.

*Il. xvii. 674. Cowper.*

The poet, as usual, is here contented with one point of similitude; for, in the exercise of the faculty, nothing can be more dissimilar than the bird and the hero, the latter only employing his quicksightedness to discover his friend Antilochus.

In another passage he briefly images the rapidity with which the Eagle descends upon his prey.

..... As the Eagle darts  
Right downward through a sullen cloud to seize  
Weak lamb or timorous hare, so he to fight  
Impetuous sprang, and shook his glittering blade.

*Il. xxii. 308. Cowper.*

Here again the application is defective; for Hector is advancing to the attack of no weak and timid antagonist, but of the dreaded Achilles.

The combat between the Eagle and Serpent is described in a very picturesque manner by

Homer,

Homer, in a passage where it is represented as an omen sent by Jupiter (*Il.* xii. 200).

Virgil, in imitating it, has formed the scene into a simile, in which it is made the comparison to Tarcho seizing and carrying off Venulus.

Utque volans alte raptum cum fulva Draconem  
Fert Aquila, implicuitque pedes, atque unguibus hæsit ;  
Saucius at Serpens sinuosa volumina versat,  
Arrectisque horret squamis, et sibilat ore ;  
Arduus insurgens : illa haud minus urget obunco  
Luctantem rostro ; simul æthera verberat alis :  
Haud aliter prædam Tiburtum ex agmine Tarcho  
Portat ovans.

*Æn.* xi. 751.

So stoops the yellow Eagle from on high,  
And bears a speckled Serpent through the sky ;  
Fastening his crooked talons on the prey,  
The prisoner hisses through the liquid way ;  
Resists the royal bird, and though opprest,  
She fights in volumes, and erects her crest ;  
Turn'd to her foe, she stiffens every scale,  
And shoots her forky tongue, and whisks her threat'ning tail.  
Against the victor all defence is weak ;  
Th'imperial bird still plies her with his beak,  
He tears her bowels, and her breast he gores,  
Then claps his pinions and securely soars.

*Dryden.*

The resemblance required that the Eagle should effect his purpose in this instance, though in Homer he is obliged to relinquish his prey : but either event is equally natural.

The

The royalty of the Eagle in his superiority to other birds of prey is painted with much force by Spenser, in a simile which he applies to Artegall flying to the attack of Radigund who had overthrown Sir Terpin :

Like to an Eagle in his kingly pride,  
Soaring through his wide empire of the air  
To weather his broad sails, by chance hath spied  
A Gosshawk, which hath seized for her share  
Upon some fowl that should her feast prepare ;  
With dreadful force he flies at her bylive,  
That with his souse, which none endure dare,  
Her from the quarry he away doth drive,  
And from her griping pounce the greedy prey doth rive.

*F. Q. v. 4. 42.*

The *Vulture*, an equally strong but less generous bird of prey, is occasionally mentioned by Homer. His description of a battle between two of them, compared to the combat between Patroclus and Sarpedon, is marked with his characteristic fidelity in painting from nature.

..... As two Vultures fight  
Bow-beak'd, crook-talon'd, on some lofty rock,  
Clanging their plumes ; so they together rush'd  
With dreadful cries.

*Il. xvi. 428. Cowper.*

Milton has introduced this bird of carnage as a fit representative of the Evil Being, in a  
simile

simile remarkably enriched, according to his manner, with picturesque circumstances. Satan, in his exploratory voyage from hell, first alights on the convexity of the world's outer orb, a "continent dark, waste, and wild," where his situation is thus compared :

As when a Vulture on Imaus bred,  
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,  
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey  
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanning kids  
On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs  
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams ;  
But on his way lights on the barren plains  
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive  
With sails and wind their cary waggons light :  
So on this windy sea of land the Fiend  
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey.

*Par. L. iii. 431.*

Devious as the description here may seem, the parallel is in the main very exact, comprising the nature and purpose of the great enemy of mankind, and his progress in the voyage. The touches of reading and imagination united, which illuminate the picture, will be admired by all who know how to estimate the value of such an union in poetry.

The *Falcon*, which, though inferior in force to the eagle, does not yield to him in courage and ferocity, could not escape the observation

of

of Homer. In the following simile the swiftness of wing by which this bird is distinguished is the sole point of comparison. It is applied to the instant disappearance of Neptune, when, under the form of Calchas, he had been rousing the Greeks to fight.

Then, swift as stoops a Falcon from the point  
Of some rude rock sublime, when he would chase  
A fowl of other wing along the meads ;  
So started Neptune thence, and disappear'd.

*Il. xiii. 62. Cowper.*

The pursuit of a dove by a hawk is by the same poet made a comparison of Achilles in rapid chase of the flying Hector.

As in the mountains, fleetest fowl of air,  
The Hawk darts eager at the Dove ; she scuds  
Aslant ; he, screaming, springs and springs again  
To seize her, all impatient for the prey :  
So flew Achilles constant to the track  
Of Hector.

*Il. xxii. 139. Cowper.*

It does not appear that in the time of Homer men had invented the art of disciplining birds of the Hawk kind to become their associates in the chase ; nor can I find in the Roman poets any allusions to falconry. In later poetry, however, such allusions are frequent ; for there is much striking imagery connected with this sport,

sport, which has always been reckoned one of a noble kind. Thus the princely Tristan, in Spenser, makes his boast,

Ne is there Hawk which mantleth her on perch,  
Whether high tow'ring or accoasting low,  
But I the measure of her flight do search,  
And all her prey, and all her diet know.

*F. Q. vi. 2. 32.*

The ascent and descent of the maneged falcon serve Ariosto for two comparisons to the same object, his imaginary Hippogriff. When this flying steed mounts into the air with Ruggiero, the poet says,

....sale in verso il ciel, via piu leggiero,  
Che'l Girifalco, a cui leva il Cappello  
Il mastro a tempo, e fa veder l'augello.

As the Jer-falcon, when the master's hand  
Removes his hood, and points the winged prey,  
Springs to the sky ; so light up-rose the Steed.

His precipitate descent with the necromancer to combat with Gradasso is thus paralleled :

Quando gli parve poi, voise il destriero,  
Che chiuse i vanni, e venne a terra a piombo :  
Come casca dal ciel Falcon maniero,  
Che levar veggia l'annitra, o'l colombo.

*Orl. Fur. ii. 50.*

He watch'd his time and turn'd the courser's head,  
Who, with closed wings, descended plumb to earth ;

As

As maneged Falcon from his airy height  
Stoops, when he sees the dove or wild-duck rise.

These are simple and obvious comparisons ; but Dryden has given a simile from this source both more ingenious and circumstantial. He is describing a sea-fight between the English and the Dutch, in which the latter have the superiority in numbers :

Have you not seen, when, whistled from the fist,  
Some Falcon stoops at what her eye design'd,  
And with her eagerness the quarry mist,  
Straight flies at check, and clips it down the wind ?  
The dastard Crow, that to the wood made wing,  
And sees the groves no shelter can afford,  
With her loud caws her craven kind does bring,  
Who, safe in numbers, cuff the noble bird :  
Among the Dutch thus Albemarle did fare, &c.

*Annus Mirabilis.*

Another striking incident in falconry is the subject of a simile in Spenser, who employs it as the parallel of a combat between prince Arthur and two antagonists :

As when a cast of Falcons make their flight  
At a Hernshaw that lies aloft on wing,  
The whiles they strike at him with heedless might,  
The wary fowl his bill doth backward wring,  
On which the first, whose force her first doth bring,  
Herself quite through the body doth engore,  
And falleth down to ground like senseless thing ;

But



But th' other, not so swift as she before,  
Fails of her souse, and passing by doth hurt no more.

F. Q. vi. 7. 9.

Various examples might be adduced, in which the terror and dispersion of combatants by a formidable foe is resembled to the attack of a hawk upon small or timorous birds; but there is nothing in the circumstances to render them particularly interesting.

*Water-fowl*, which enliven so many marshy and solitary situations, have frequently attracted the notice of poetical observers. Their number in the maritime plains of Lesser Asia suggested to Homer a comparison for the thousands of assembled Greeks which appeared at the muster before Troy.

..... as a multitude of fowls in flocks  
Assembled various, Geese, or Cranes, or Swans  
Lithe-neck'd, long hovering o'er Cayster's banks  
On wanton plumes, successive on the mead  
Alight at last, and with a clang so loud  
That all the hollow vale of Asius rings;  
In number such from ships and tents effused,  
They cover'd the Scamandrian plain.

Il. ii. 459. *Cowper.*

It was merely *multitude* that Homer had in view in this simile; for the *noise* uttered by these fowls is afterwards disparagingly compared to that of the Trojans in their advance.

With deafning shouts, and with the clang of arms  
 The host of Troy advanced. Such clang is heard  
 Along the skies, when from incessant showers  
 Escaping, and from winter's cold, the Cranes  
 Take wing, and over ocean speed away.

*Il. iii. 2. Cowper.*

The same simile is given by Virgil, and also applied to the Trojans when, invested in their fortified camp by Turnus, they descry the shield of Æneas raised as a signal of approaching succour :

..... Clamorem ad sidera tollunt  
 Dardanidæ e muris : spes addita suscitât iras :  
 Tela manu jaciunt : quales sub nubibus atris  
 Strymoniaë dant signa Grues, atque æthera tranant  
 Cum sonitu, fugiuntque Notos clamore secundo.

*Æn. x. 262.*

Fired with new hopes the joyful Trojans spy  
 The shining orb ; their darts and javelins fly,  
 And their loud clamours tempest all the sky. }  
 Less loud the thick-embod' d Cranes repair,  
 In ranks embattled, through the clouds of air,  
 When, at the signal given, they leave behind,  
 With rapid flight, the pinions of the wind.

*Pitt.*

The judgement of the poet, however, may be questioned, in repeating a comparison applied by Homer in derogation of the people whom he himself certainly did not intend to disparage.

Lucan

Lucan happily compares the effect of a night storm in dispersing a fleet and confounding its order of sailing, to that of a high wind in dissipating a flight of cranes in their annual migration. The simile contains some good points of natural description.

Strymona sic gelidum, bruma pellente, relinquunt  
Poturæ te, Nile, Grues, primoque volatu  
Effingunt varias, casu monstrante, figuras :  
Mox, ubi percussit tensas Notus altior alas,  
Confusos temere immixtæ glomerantur in orbes,  
Et turbata perit dispersis littera pennis.

*Phars. v. 711.*

So when the Cranes, by winter's heralds warn'd,  
Desert cold Strymon's banks for distant Nile,  
In varied figures first they cut their way,  
As instinct guides ; but if a rougher gale  
Beats on their wide-stretch'd wings, in clustering groups,  
A mingled rout, they fly, and all confus'd  
The letter'd order perishes in air.

The "turbata littera"—disturbed letter—of the original, alludes to the wedge-like order of flight of these birds, resembled by the ancients to the letter V reversed. Milton, in his fine description of different kinds of birds as first created, alludes to this habit of the migratory water-fowl, which "rang'd in figure wedge their way."

The mode of getting on wing practised by

the Crane (which is common to the long-legged water-fowl) is described with picturesque accuracy by Ariosto, where he makes it a comparison to the rise of the winged horse that bore the necromancer.

Commencio a poco a poco indi a levarse,  
Come suol far la peregrina Grue ;  
Che correr prima, e poi veggiamo alzar  
Alla terra, vicina un braccio, o due :  
E, quando tutte sono all' aria sparse,  
Velocissime mostra l'ali sue.

*Orl. Fur. ii. 49.*

By slow degrees he rose upon the wing ;  
As when the stranger Crane at first is seen  
To run, and then to lift his hovering form  
Above the ground a space, till all his plumes  
In air expanded, straight he shoots away  
On rapid pinions.

Of water-fowl, there is none which displays such beauty of form and gracefulness of motion as the Swan ; of which, however, I find but few descriptions in simile : Silius Italicus has given one, which, though brief, is extremely beautiful.

Haud secus Eridani stagnis, ripave Caystri,  
Innatat albus olor ; pronoque immobile corpus  
Dat fluvio, et pedibus tacitas eremigat undas.

*L. xiv. 190.*

Thus on Cayster's stream, or swelling Po,  
Swims the white Swan, and gives his moveless form

Prone

Prone to the current, while with oary feet  
He scoops the silent wave.

Whoever has been an observer of this stately bird as he floats at his ease in conscious beauty down a stream, must recognise the felicity of this picture. The application is not among the more obvious, for it is made the object of comparison to the quiet manner in which Marcellus first invested Syracuse.

The Swan is occasionally noticed as an object of chase to the larger birds of prey. Tasso, introducing it in this connexion as a parallel to Armida, alarmed and unprotected in the midst of foes, assigns to it an appropriate posture and action.

Qual'è il timido Cigno a cui sovrasta  
Col fero artiglio l'Aquila proterva;  
Ch'a terra si rannichia, e china l'ali:  
I suoi timidi moti eran cotali.

*Ger. Lib. xx. 68.*

As when a fearful Swan beholds on high  
The Eagle's talons threat'ning from the sky,  
Shudd'ring she cowers to earth with wings declined:  
Such timid motions show'd her troubled mind.

The Halcyon, an aquatic bird which has been the subject of much poetical fiction, has supplied Valerius Flaccus with a descriptive passage, equally beautiful and natural, introduced  
in

in a simile illustrative of the feelings of Hercules during a dream representing to him his lost Hylas.

Fluctus ab undisoni ceu forte crepidine saxi  
Cum rapit Halcyones miseræ fœtumque laremque ;  
It super ægra parens, queriturque tumentibus undis,  
Certa sequi quocumque ferant ; audetque, pavetque ;  
Icta fatiscit aquis donec domus, haustaque fluctu est :  
Illa dolens vocem dedit, et se sustulit alis.

*Argon. iv. 44.*

As when from shelter of an arching rock,  
Sea-beat, the flood bears off a Halcyon's nest  
With all her unfledg'd brood ; the wretched dam  
Hovering above, plains to the swelling waves,  
Resolved to follow wheresoe'er they waft  
The precious freight ; and dares and fears by turns ;  
Till, batter'd by the tide, the fragile house  
Sinks in the whelming flood : a piercing cry  
Attests her grief : she soars, and quits the scene.

It would be difficult to produce a more pathetic incident from the records of animal life, or one described with a happier selection of circumstances. A bird deprived of her young has, however, afforded to various poets an image of distress, which they have wrought with different degrees of force and observation of nature.

Homer leads the way in a simile, in which the nightly renewed sorrow of Penelope for the loss of Ulysses is compared to the song of the  
Nightingale,

Nightingale, fabulously supposed to be her lamentation for the death of Itylus, her son when in the human form.

As when at spring's first entrance, her sweet song  
The azure-crested\* Nightingale renews,  
Daughter of Pandareus; within the grove's  
Thick foliage perch'd, she pours her echoing voice  
Now deep, now clear, with ever-varied strains  
Deploring Itylus, whom she destroy'd  
(Her son by royal Zethus) unaware.

*Odyss. xix. 518. Cowper.*

This simile, indeed, has no proper reference to a bird's loss of its young; and its only natural part is the description of the Nightingale's song, which is highly characteristic.

Moschus, on the contrary, in his *Idyll* entitled "Megara the wife of Hercules," diversifying by a simile her lamentation for the death of her children killed by their father in a paroxysm of insanity, has confined the description to the circumstance of the destruction of a young brood, without particularizing the mother bird.

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\* The Translator has not informed the reader why he has bestowed on this bird the epithet of "azure-crested," which is neither justified by reality, nor is a true interpretation of *χλωρηΐς*, which signifies "of a greenish or yellowish hue," without any reference to *crest*.

As wails the Bird her tender offspring's fate,  
 Whom, yet unfledg'd, in the thick bush conceal'd,  
 Some cruel Snake devours : she flits around  
 With quick shrill cries, unable to protect.  
 Her darling young, nor daring to approach  
 The fell destroyer : so, with horror seiz'd,  
 I, wretched mother ! ran from place to place.

The comparison is exact, as it includes not only the slaughter of the progeny, but the personal fear of the mothers from the strength and fury of the murderers.

Statius introduces the incident of a brood of young birds devoured by a snake, with a variation of circumstances, in a simile applied to the lamentation of Hypsipile on account of the death of young Archemorus, who was crushed by a stroke of the tail of an enormous serpent.

Ac velut aligeræ sedem fœtusque parentis  
 Cum piger umbrosa populatus in ilice serpens,  
 Illa redit, querulæque domus mirata quietem,  
 Stat super impendens, advectosque horrida mœsto  
 Excutit ore cibos ; cum solus in arbore cara  
 Sanguis, et errantes per capta cubilia plumæ.

*Thet. v. 599.*

So when, the feather'd dam abroad for food,  
 Her full-fraught nest, rear'd on the shady oak,  
 A climbing Snake has pillag'd ; from her quest  
 Return'd, the silence of her chirping home  
 First moves surprise : but when, incumbent near,  
 She views the fav'rite branch distain'd with blood,

And



And scatter'd plumes the only relic left,—  
 With horror chill'd, her trembling bill lets fall  
 The far-sought morsel.

The action and expression of the parent bird on discovering her loss are very naturally represented. Thomson had probably this passage before him when writing his pathetic description of the nightingale robbed of her young; especially in the line,

..... to the ground the vain provision falls.

It is, however, Virgil's celebrated simile of the mourning nightingale that has been the principal object of imitation to him and other poets. The relation by Proteus of Orpheus's second loss of Eurydice introduces the following comparison of his grief and despair.

*Qualis populea mœrens Philomela sub umbra  
 Amissos queritur fœtus, quos durus arator  
 Observans nido implumes detraxit: at illa  
 Flet noctem, ramoque sedens miserabile carmen  
 Integrat, et mœstis late loca questibus implet.*

*Georg. iv. 511.*

As Philomel in poplar shades, alone,  
 For her lost offspring pours a mother's moan,  
 Which some rough ploughman marking for his prey  
 From the warm nest unfledged hath dragg'd away;  
 Perch'd on a bough she all night long complains,  
 And fills the grove with sad repeated strains.

*Warton.*

**This**

This passage is marked with the curious choice of expression for which the author is distinguished; and the minute touches of the *hard* ploughman, *marking* and carrying off the *unfledged* young, have been much admired. The force of the description is, however, principally thrown upon the figure of the deprived mother, as the counterpart of the widowed Orpheus; and if there is an inaccuracy in making the songster a female, and assigning a mournful character to the Nightingale's chant, which is, in fact, a rich, varied, and lively melody, Homer was his precursor in the error.

I shall conclude this head with two or three miscellaneous similes.

In Virgil's ship-race, Mnestheus, passing a competitor who had run upon the rocks, and steering for the open sea, aided by sails as well as oars, gives rise to the following comparison:

Qualis spelunca subito commota Columba,  
Cui domus et dulces latebroso in pumice nidi,  
Fertur in arva volans, plausumque exterrita pennis  
Dat tecto ingentem: mox aëre lapsa quieto  
Radit iter liquidum, celeres neque commovet alas.

Æn. v. 213.

As when the Dove her rocky hold forsakes,  
Roused in a fright, her sounding wings she shakes,  
The cavern rings with clattering; out she flies,  
And leaves her callow care, and cleaves the skies:

At

At first she flutters : but at length she springs  
To smother flight, and shoots upon her wings.

*Dryden.*

Though this simile does not possess the resemblance which may be called moral, yet the circumstances of action and motion are happily paralleled ; especially if we conceive the vessel, after gaining the open sea, as no longer impelled by oars, but gliding along in full sail. As a painting in natural history the description has great merit. The bird here intended is the *Rock-pigeon*.

Statius derives from a dove-cote a striking scene, which he places in comparison with the people of Thebes scarcely daring to open their gates and issue into the field, after the bloody combat of the hostile brothers which they had beheld from their walls.

Sic ubi prospectuæ scandentem limina turris  
Idaliæ volucres fulvum aspexere draconem,  
Intus agunt natos, et fœta cubilia vallant  
Unguibus, imbellesque citant ad prælia pennas :  
Mox ruerit licet ille reiro, tamen æra nudum  
Candida turba timet, tandemque ingressa volatus  
Horret, et a mediis etiamnum respicit astris.

*Theb. xii. 15.*

Thus when th' Idalian Doves alarm'd survey,  
Climbing their lofty tower, a dusky snake ;  
Their young call'd home, they guard the seat of love  
With

With threat'ning claws, and fit for bold defence  
 Their plumes unwarlike: soon, perchance, the foe  
 Retires; but still the snowy people fear  
 To trust the open sky; and, when again  
 They dare to soar, look back from middle air.

There is novelty in this picture, and its application is ingenious.

Virgil has drawn a simile from his observation (for it appears to be original) of the manners of the *House Swallow*, which he introduces as affording a comparison to the rapid evolutions of Juturna when acting as the charioteer of her brother Turnus in battle.

Nigra velut magnas domini cum divitis ædes  
 Pervolat, et pennis alta arria lustrat Hirundo,  
 Pabula parva legens, nidisque loquacibus escas;  
 Et nunc porticibus vacuis, nunc humida circum  
 Stagna sonat: similis medios Juturna per hostes  
 Fertur equis, rapidoque volans obit omnia curru.

*Æn.* xii. 473.

As the black Swallow near the palace plies,  
 O'er empty courts and under arches flies,  
 Now hawks aloft, now skims along the flood,  
 To furnish her loquacious nest with food;  
 So drives the rapid Goddess o'er the plains;  
 The smoking horses run with loosen'd reins.

*Dryden.*

They who have amused themselves with attending to the rapid flight and quick turns of  
 a swal-

a swallow in full exertion, will be struck with the truth of the description, as well as with the justness of the parallel.

## XII.

### FROM SERPENTS.

The Serpent tribe, in countries infested by them, must always have attracted much notice, both as objects of curiosity and admiration, and as exciting ideas of personal danger. In the latter view, the poets have frequently drawn a comparison between the sudden alarm felt at the unexpected sight of an enemy, and that occasioned by discovering the vicinity of a venomous snake. The similitude is too close and obvious to admit of ingenuity in the application; and it is only when some picturesque circumstance is added, that such passages merit particular regard. In the following simile of Homer, the serpent is simply mentioned, and the force of description is expanded on the affrighted man.

As one, descrying in the woodland heights  
A dreadful Serpent, at the sight recoils,  
His limbs quake under him, his ruddy cheek  
Turns deadly pale, he flies, he disappears :  
So godlike Paris, at the dreaded sight

Of Menelaus, plunged into the ranks,  
And vanish'd lost among the crowds of Troy.

*Il. iii. 33. Cowper.*

Virgil, in his imitation of this simile, which he has applied to the Greek Androgeus falling unawares into the midst of a body of Trojans, has adorned it with some description of the serpent, whom he represents as enraged by being trodden upon.

Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem  
Pressit humi nitens, trepidusque repente refugit  
Attollentem iras, et cærule colla tumentem :  
Haud secus Androgeus visu tremefactus abibat.

*Æn. ii. 379.*

As when some peasant in a bushy brake  
Has with unwary footing press'd a Snake,  
He starts aside astonish'd when he spies  
His rising crest, blue neck, and flaming eyes :  
So from our arms surprised Androgeus flies.

*Dryden.*

Homer enters more into the natural history of the animal, where he employs it as a comparison to Hector waiting the attack of Achilles.

As some huge Serpent in a cave, that feeds  
On baneful drugs, and swells with deadliest ire,  
A traveller approaching, coils himself  
Around his den, and hideous looks around :  
So Hector &c.

*Il. xxii. 93. Cowper.*

It is some objection to this spirited picture  
in

in its application, that there is a character of malignity in the animal, which is wholly unsuitable to the generous temper of the Trojan hero.

Virgil, who appears to have drawn from the life when the serpent is his subject, has two more similes descriptive of different circumstances relative to its history. It is painted in the brilliant colours of renovated vigour, as a parallel to the youthful Pyrrhus forcing an entrance into Priam's palace.

Qualis ubi in lucem Coluber mala gramina pastus,  
Frigida sub terra tumidum quem bruma tegebat,  
Nunc positus novus exuviis nitidusque juvena,  
Lubrica convolvit sublato pectore terga  
Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trisulcis.

*Æn. ii. 471.*

So shines, renew'd in youth, the crested Snake,  
Who slept the winter in a thorny brake,  
And, casting off his slough, when spring returns,  
Now looks aloft, and with new glory burns :  
Restored with poisonous herbs, his ardent sides  
Reflect the sun, and raised on spires he rides ;  
High o'er the grass hissing he rolls along,  
And brandishes by fits his forky tongue.

*Dryden.*

The figure of the serpent is here finely wrought, but there is nothing particularly appropriate in the comparison. It has, however,  
been

been copied by Statius, Silius Italicus, and other poets; and Silius has applied it more happily in one passage, where Hannibal, leaving his winter-quarters at Capua, carries terror through the adjacent country.

The galley of Sergestus, which, in the race, ran on the rocks, and was disabled by the loss of the oars on one side, is compared in its mutilated condition to a wounded serpent.

Qualis sæpe viæ deprensus in aggere Serpens,  
 Ærea quem obliquum rota transiit; aut gravis ictu  
 Seminecem liquit saxo lacerumque viator;  
 Nequidquam longos fugiens dat corpore tortus,  
 Parte ferox, ardensque oculis, et sibila colla  
 Arduus attollens; pars vulnere clauda retentat  
 Nexantem nodis, seque in sua membra plicantem:  
 Tali remigio navis se tarda movebat.

*Æn. v. 273.*

As when a Snake, surprised upon the road,  
 Is crush'd athwart her body by the load  
 Of heavy wheels; or with a mortal wound,  
 Her belly bruised, and trodden to the ground,  
 In vain, with loosen'd curls, she crawls along,  
 Yet fierce above she brandishes her tongue;  
 Glares with her eyes, and bristles with her scales,  
 But, crouching on the dust, her parts unsound she trails:  
 So slowly to the port the Centaur tends, &c.

*Dryden.*

The liveliness and exactness of description in this passage are admirable; but a great part of it,



it, in the Homeric manner, has no direct application to the subject of comparison.

The readers of Pope will probably recollect the use he has made of the same object of similitude where he is treating on versification in his Essay on Criticism:

A needless Alexandrine ends the song,  
That, like a wounded Snake, drags its slow length along.  
L. 356.

### XIII.

#### FROM INSECTS.

Although this class of animated beings from their diminutive bulk may seem ill adapted for comparison in subjects where a certain degree of dignity is to be preserved, yet their vast numbers, and the curious economy under which some of their tribes live, compensate in some measure this natural defect. Among these, the *Bee* has from early times attracted notice; and has not only afforded an object of speculation to the naturalist, and of profit to the rural economist, but has supplied the poet with images applicable to various purposes of description and comparison.

Homer speaks of this insect only in its

N

state

state of natural congregation, when he makes its numbers a parallel to those of the Greeks assembling in council:

As from the hollow rock Bees stream abroad,  
And in succession endless seek the fields,  
Now clustering, and now scatter'd far and near,  
In spring-time, among all the new-blown flowers:  
So they &c. *Il. ii. 87. Cowper.*

This simile has been copied by Milton with the same simple application to *number*, but with the addition of various circumstances to improve the picture, in a beautiful passage following the summons of the fallen angels to council in Pandæmonium.

..... As Bees  
In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,  
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive  
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers  
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,  
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,  
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer  
Their state affairs: so thick the æry crowd  
Swarm'd and were straiten'd. *Par. L. i. 768.*

Here the bees are in their domesticated state, and the minute particulars of their habitation and manners, though contributing nothing to enforce the similitude, bring to the mind recollections of the most agreeable kind.

Virgil

Virgil has gone further into resemblance where he compares the Tyrians busily employed in the various labours of founding the new city of Carthage, to a colony of bees at work on a summer's day.

Qualis Apes æstate nova per florea rura  
Exercet sub sole labor ; cum gentis adultos  
Educunt fœtus, aut cum liquentia mella  
Stipant, et dulci distendunt nectare cellas ;  
Aut onera accipiunt venientum, aut agmine facto  
Ignavum fucos pecus a præsepibus arcent :  
Fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella.

*Æn. i. 434.*

Such is their toil, and such their busy pains,  
As exercise the Bees in flowery plains,  
When winter past, and summer scarce begun,  
Invites them forth to labour in the sun :  
Some lead their youth abroad, while some condense  
Their liquid store, and some in cells dispense :  
Some at the gate stand ready to receive  
The golden burden, and their friends relieve :  
All with united force combine to drive  
The lazy drones from the laborious hive :  
With envy stung they view each others deeds \* ;  
The fragrant work with diligence proceeds.

*Dryden.*

This simile not only affords a very pleasing

\* The English reader should be informed that this line is wholly unauthorized by the original.

image, but contains the happiest parallel that perhaps could be devised to the scene of industry with which it is compared.

Silius Italicus, as a comparison to the people of Saguntum hurrying within their walls after a sally, on the approach of Hannibal, has described the bees hastening home through fear of rain :

Aut ubi Cecropius formidine nubis aquosæ  
Sparsa super flores examina tollit Hymettos,  
Ad dulces ceras et odori corticis antra  
Mellis Apes gravidæ properant, densoque volatu  
Raucum connexæ glomerant ad limina murmur.

*Bell. Punic. ii. 217.*

As when the threat'nings of a rain-fraught cloud  
The busy swarms, that range amid the flowers  
Of sweet Hymettus, drive in haste away,  
With honey laden to their waxen combs  
And cells of odorous bark they clust'ring fly,  
And at the threshold clung, hoarse murmurs breathe.

When, in the Pharsalia, the Roman troops in Africa were hastening on board their ships with the intention of quitting the senatorian party, they are represented as being recalled to their duty by the severe reproaches of Cato. This incident suggests to the poet the following simile :

Haud aliter media revocavit ab æquore puppes,  
Quam, simul effetas linquant examina ceras,

Atque

Atque oblita favi non miscent nexibus alas,  
 Sed sibi quisque volat, nec jam degustat amarum  
 Desidiosa thymum; Phrygii sonus increpet æris,  
 Attonitæ posuere fugam, studiumque laboris  
 Floriferi repetunt, et sparsi mellis amorem:  
 Gaudet in Hyblæo securus gramine pastor  
 Divitias servasse casæ: sic voce Catonis  
 Inculcata viris justi patientia Martis.

*Phars. ix. 284.*

As when the swarming Bees their empty combs  
 Deserting, rush abroad in vagrant flight,  
 Forgetful of their hive they fail to mix  
 Their clustering wings, nor browse the tasteful thyme,  
 But singly stray; if now the Phrygian brass  
 Loud tinkling sounds, alarm'd they hurry back,  
 Resume their flowery toil, and feel renew'd  
 The ardent zeal to cull the scatter'd sweets;  
 The swain rejoicing views from Hybla's hill  
 His rustic wealth secured: thus Cato's voice  
 Recall'd endurance of the toils of Mars.

The circumstances attending a rambling swarm of bees are not ill depicted in this passage; but as a simile it appears to me one of those which degrade the subject to which they are applied, by an inadequate and disproportioned parallel. The point of resemblance, consisting in the effect of the tinkling of brass upon the bees, compared to that of the address of Cato upon the soldiers, is but feeble in itself, and brings together two things the natural disparity

disparity of which is so great, that the result borders upon burlesque. In the foregoing simile from Silius Italicus, the effect of the debasing passion of fear alone being the subject of parallel, that of the human fugitives cannot be depreciated by any comparison; but a heroic act of so highly dignified a character as that of Cato will not bear to be assimilated with a mean and trivial occurrence.

Virgil has a simile (borrowed from Apollonius Rhodius) in which the confusion in the capital of king Latinus, on the approach of Æneas and his allies, is resembled to that of bees smoked in their cell.

Inclusas ut cum latebroso in pumice pastor  
 Vestigavit Apes, fumoque implevit amaro;  
 Illæ intus trepidæ rerum per cerea castra  
 Discurrunt, magnisque acuunt stridoribus iras:  
 Volvitur ater odor tectis; tum murmure cæco  
 Intus saxa sonant: vacuas it fumus ad auras.

*Æn.* xii. 587.

Thus when the Bees, track'd to their secret home  
 Within some cavern'd rock, a swain invades  
 With noisome smoke; in dire dismay they run  
 This way and that about their waxen camp,  
 And call forth all their rage with hissings loud:  
 Meantime the deadly vapour rolls around  
 The inmost cells; a sullen murmur sounds,  
 And from the chinks the blackening fumes ascend.

If there is little exactness of parallel in this passage, the picture it presents, though perhaps not altogether suitable to Virgil's epic dignity, is lively and natural.

That irritable insect the *Wasp* is made the subject of a simile by Homer, who has described its manners with that exactness which denotes the real observer of nature. We may be assured that he had been an actor in the following scene :

..... As Wasps forsake  
 Their home by the way-side, provoked by boys  
 Disturbing inconsiderate their abode,  
 Not without nuisance sore to all who pass ;  
 For if, thenceforth, some traveller unaware  
 Annoy them, issuing one and all they swarm  
 Around him, fearless in their broods' defence :  
 With courage fierce as theirs forth rush'd a flood  
 Of Myrmidons all shouting to the skies.

*Il. xvi. 259. Cowper.*

The action in this comparison is sufficiently applicable ; for it is when their quarters are immediately endangered by the attack of the Trojans upon the fleet, that the Myrmidons rush upon them ; and if the simile be thought disparaging to the human actors, it is upon no single hero that the degradation falls, but upon  
 a name-

a nameless crowd. To such considerations, however, Homer was little attentive.

It has already been remarked, that when such a simple idea as that of number is to be enforced, it is immaterial from what objects the image is taken, provided they are striking examples of the quality in question. Thus poets employ indifferently the stars of heaven, the sands on the sea-shore, and the leaves in autumn, as comparisons of multitude. Homer, among the similes which distinguish the first grand muster of the Grecian troops before Troy, gives one in which a swarm of *Flies* is the parallel of number.

As in the hovel where the peasant milks  
His kine in spring-time, when his pails are fill'd,  
Thick clouds of humming insects on the wing  
Swarm all around him; so the Grecians swarm'd  
An unsummed multitude o'er all the plain.

*Il. ii. 469. Cowper.*

The pertinacity of this insect in its attacks has induced Homer, with his usual disregard of refinement, to make a single fly the object of resemblance to Menelaus, resolutely advancing to the defence of the dead body of Patroclus. Pallas inspires the hero with persevering boldness

.... such



.....such as prompts the Fly, which oft  
 From flesh of man repulsed, her purpose yet  
 To bite holds fast, resolved on human blood.

*Il. xvii. 570. Cowper.*

From a note in Cowper's translation I observe that Villosion, confessing that a hero would be degraded by comparing him to a fly, asserts that it is not the persons, but the courage, of the two that are here compared: but this is a mere subterfuge, founded on the indirect manner in which Homer frequently introduces his similes; for the parallel really takes place in the reader's imagination. Pope chooses to convert the fly into a hornet, by which he gains little in dignity, and spoils the resemblance.

Ariosto does not hesitate to copy the comparison, however degrading, of the Greek bard, where he resembles Ruggiero attacking the ork, to a fly pestering a mastiff.

Simil battaglia fa la Moscha audace  
 Contra il mastin nel polveroso Augusto:  
 .....  
 Ne gli occhi il punge, e nel' grifo mordace  
 Volagli intorno, e gli sta sempre accosto;  
 E' quel sonar fa spesso il dente asciutto,  
 Ma un tratto, ch' egli arrivi, appaga il tutto.

*Orl. Fur. x. 105.*

With

With the gaunt mastiff thus the Fly maintains  
Audacious fight when August dries the plains ;

\* \* \* \* \*

Now on his jaw he fixes, now his eyes,  
And still in ever-wheeling circles flies  
T'elude the teeth that vainly bite the air,  
For one dire stroke would finish all his care.

*Hoole.*

Milton has given a little rural picture in which this property of the fly is made illustrative of the importunity of Satan in renewing his attempts upon our Saviour after repeated defeats.

..... as a swarm of Flies in vintage time  
About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,  
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound.

*Par. Reg. iv. 15.*

No poet, however, with whom I am acquainted, has so much excelled in painting the numbers and actions of the minute winged tribe as Spenser, who has twice introduced swarms of *Gnats* as objects of comparison. The first passage occurs where the Red-cross Knight is annoyed with the loathsome brood of the monster Error.

As gentle shepherd in sweet eventide,  
When ruddy Phœbus gins to welke in west,  
High on a hill, his flocks to viewen wide,  
Marks which do bite their hasty supper best,

A cloud

A cloud of cumbrous Gnats do him molest,  
All striving to infix their feeble stings,  
That from their noyance he can no where rest,  
But with his clownish hands their tender wings  
He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.

*F. Q. i. 1. 23.*

In the second passage, the two knights, Arthur and Guyon, approaching the castle of Alma, are assailed by a numerous "raskal rout," whom they readily disperse with their swords; and the conflict is thus compared:

As when a swarm of Gnats at eventide  
Out of the fens of Allan do arise,  
Their murmuring small trumpets sounden wide,  
Whiles in the air their clust'ring army flies,  
That as a cloud doth seem to dim the skies;  
Ne man nor beast may rest or take repast  
For their sharp wounds and noyous injuries,  
Till the fierce northern wind with blust'ring blast  
Do blow them quite away, and in the ocean cast.

*F. Q. ii. 9. 16.*

The scene in this simile is laid in Ireland, where Spenser for some time resided, and the marshy quality of which country had doubtless given him particular occasion to observe the molestation of these insects. The comparisons are rendered exact not only by the number, but the insignificance of the assailants.

A more formidable insect foe, which, from  
the

the mischief it inflicts, might form a subject even for a sublime comparison, is the *Locust*; of which, however, I find fewer vestiges in the poets than might have been expected. Homer briefly compares the Trojans driven by Achilles into the stream of the Xanthus, to Locusts flying from the fire which he had probably seen employed to expel these ravagers from cultivated ground.

As when, by violence of fire expell'd,  
 Locusts uplifted on the wing escape  
 To some broad river; swift the sudden blaze  
 Pursues them; they, astonish'd, strew the flood:  
 So, by Achilles driven, a mingled throng  
 Of horses and of warriors overspread  
 Xanthus, and glutted all his sounding course.

*Il. xxi. 12. Cowper.*

The similitude here consists in the numbers and fate of the sufferers, not in their characters.

Milton, who had the talent of elevating even the lowest subjects, has taken advantage, in his simile of Locusts, of the infliction of the plague of these insects upon the Egyptians by the ministry of Moses. This enables him to open the description with great dignity.

..... As when the potent rod  
 Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,  
 Way'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud

Of

Of Locusts, warping on the eastern wind,  
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile :  
So numberless were those bad angels seen  
Hovering on wing under the cope of hell

*Par. L. i. 338.*

Although number is here the only circumstance of similitude directly marked, yet the "hovering on wing," and the mischievous nature common to the primary and secondary objects, are to be taken into the resemblance.

#### XIV.

##### FROM VEGETABLES.

Although the life possessed by the vegetable creation be of a more imperfect kind than that of animals, it suffices to give them individual existence ; and we therefore find that in poetry, trees and other plants are as familiarly introduced in direct or comparative description under a personal character, as the subjects of the preceding classes. Being destitute of spontaneous motion, they are, indeed, disqualified for becoming fit representatives of the actors in busy scenes, and are chiefly limited, as objects of similitude, to passive modes. Yet the stately growth of forest trees, rendering them to the sight

sight images of magnitude superior to any thing else endowed with life that we behold, together with the long duration of their existence, impresses them with a character of sublimity which allows them a place in dignified and aggrandizing comparison.

Homer in several passages compares his heroes to Oaks. Thus, the two Lapithean chiefs who defend the gate of the Grecian barrier are advantageously paralleled in the following simile:

..... As when two tall Oaks  
On the high mountains day by day endure  
Rough wind and rain, by deep-descending roots  
Of hugest growth fast-founded in the soil;  
So they &c. *Il. xii. 132. Cowper.*

The chiefs being planted, as it were, to protect the entrance by their bulk and strength of arm, their resemblance to lofty trees is more exact than if they had been actively engaged in the field.

The same comparison is applied by Virgil (*Æn. ix.*) to Pandarus and Bitias, who are stationed in like manner as guards of the Trojan ramparts; but the poet has exercised more invention in his description of the mountain oak assailed by contending winds, already quoted under the third division of similes, but which perhaps more properly belongs to this head.

The

The superior grandeur of Milton's conceptions is equally displayed in his adoption of this image of comparative greatness, as in the other hints of sublimity, which he has taken from his predecessors. The fallen angels, still faithful to their leader, though with "their glory wither'd," are thus resembled :

.....as when Heaven's fire  
Hath scathed the forest Oaks or mountain Pines,  
With singed top their stately growth though bare  
Stands on the blasted heath. *Par. L. i. 612.*

The similitude here applies in every point ; lofty stature, firm root, injury from celestial fire, and station upon a burnt and barren soil, are attributes both of the primary and accessory subjects.

But no simile of the *heroic* kind derived from trees has been wrought with so much care, and with so noble an effect, as Lucan's celebrated comparison of Pompey, at the commencement of the civil war, to an aged and consecrated Oak.

Qualis frugifero Quercus sublimis in agro  
Exuvias veteres populi, sacrataque gestans  
Dona ducum, nec jam validis radicibus hærens,  
Pondere fixa suo est ; nudosque per æra ramos  
Effundens, trunco, non frondibus, efficit umbram :  
At quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,  
Tot circum silvæ firmo se robore tollant,  
Sola tamen colitur. *Phars. i. 136.*

So, in the field with Ceres' bounty spread,  
Uprears some ancient Oak his reverend head ;  
Chaplets and sacred gifts his boughs adorn,  
And spoils of war by mighty heroes worn :  
But, the first vigour of his root now gone,  
He stands dependent on his weight alone  
All bare his naked branches are display'd,  
And with his leafless trunk he forms a shade :  
Yet though the winds his ruin daily threat,  
As every blast would heave him from his seat ;  
Though thousand fairer trees the field supplies,  
That rich in youthful verdure round him rise ;  
Fixt in his ancient state he yields to none,  
And wears the honours of the grove alone.

*Rowe.*

The resemblance here is of natural to moral greatness ; and it is very exact. Pompey was at that time the most distinguished person in the Roman state ; great in the renown of past actions, decorated with a profusion of public honours, and supreme in authority and esteem ; but his best days were over, and he was rather the image of power than the possessor of it. He was supported chiefly by the memory of what he had been ; and was unequal to a new conflict with an active antagonist. All these circumstances are paralleled in the condition of the aged oak, still the most venerable object of the forest, but unsound at the root, and verging to its fall.

*In.*



In one of Homer's similes, the comparison of a warrior to a tree is employed to produce rather a pathetic than an aggrandizing effect. When the young and comely Simoisius falls beneath the spear of Ajax, the catastrophe is thus paralleled :

So, nourish'd long in some well-water'd spot,  
Crown'd with green boughs, the smooth-skin'd Poplar falls,  
Doom'd by the builder to supply with wheels  
Some splendid chariot : on the bank it lies,  
A lifeless trunk, to parch in summer airs.

*Il. iv. 482. Cowper.*

As there is nothing in the purpose for which the tree was felled either improving the similitude, or conveying a poetical image, it might have been more judicious to have omitted that circumstance.

The same incident of a tree cut down is adduced by Virgil with a very different association, where he makes it the parallel of no less an event than the final destruction of Troy ; and he accordingly labours to paint it as an exertion of great force, and attended with a mighty crash.

Ac veluti, summis antiquam in montibus Ornum  
Cum ferro accisam crebrisque bipennibus instant  
Eruere agricolæ certatim ; illa usque minatur,  
Et tremefacta comam concusso vertice nutat :

Vulneribus donec paulatim evicta, supremum  
Congemuit, traxitque jugis avulsa ruinam.

*Æn. ii. 626.*

As when the peasants emulous contend  
With axes to uproot an ancient Ash  
On the high mountains ; bowing to a fall  
She trembles oft, and shakes her leafy locks,  
Till, vanquish'd by degrees, she sinks, then groans  
Her last, and drags down ruin after her.

*Cowper.\**

All that language could do to confer force and dignity has in this passage been effected by the Roman poet ; yet perhaps the compared object is essentially too much inferior to the real one to afford a satisfactory parallel ; especially where the Gods themselves have just been represented as aiding in the subversion of the city. It would, I think, have displayed a more correct taste to have omitted all simile on the occasion ; for ornament was not wanted after so much splendid description.

Homer takes another subject of the vegetable

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\* The great superiority of this version (given in a note of the writer's translation of the *Iliad*) to those of Dryden and Pitt, makes me much regret that I have not more by the same hand to present in place of their diffuse, exaggerated, and inexact translations. Dryden, indeed, has many happinesses of expression, but they are often dearly paid for by deviations both from the matter and manner of the original.

kingdom as a comparison to a fallen warrior, in a beautiful passage following the death of Euphorbus slain by Menelaus.

As the luxuriant Olive by a swain  
 Rear'd in some solitude where rills abound  
 Puts forth her buds, and, fann'd by genial airs  
 On all sides, hangs her boughs with whitest flow'rs,  
 But by a sudden whirlwind from the trench  
 Uptorn, lies all extended on the field :  
 Such, Pantheus' warlike son Euphorbus seem'd.

*Il. xvii. 53. Cowper.*

In this simile no circumstances are added but such as contribute to picturesque effect, and harmonize with the feelings excited by the real scene. The passage is copied by Valerius Flaccus with scarcely any alteration in the imagery.

The Grecian bard has deduced from the shedding of the *leaves* of trees a striking moral comparison which has been frequently cited. Diomedes meeting Glaucus in the field of battle demands his name and race; and is thus answered:

Why asks the brave Tydides whence am I ?  
 For, as the leaves, so springs the race of man :  
 Chill blasts shake down the leaves, and warm'd anew  
 By vernal airs, the grove puts forth again,  
 Age after age ; so man is born and dies.

*Il. vi. 146. Cowper.*

No more apt resemblance of the short-lived  
 o 2 generations

generations of human beings, successively as it were thrusting off each other from the mortal scene, could have been found; while the patriarchal tree which puts forth these annual products may in imagination be compared to the exhaustless parent of ages, Time.

From the falling leaves Ariosto has drawn a comparison of the inconstancy of a faithless wife.

Ma costei, più volubile che foglia,  
Quando l' autunno è più privo d'umore,  
Che'l freddo vento gli albori ne spoglia  
E le soffia dinanzi al suo furore,  
Verso il marito cangiò tosto voglia &c.

*Orl. Fur.* xxi. 15.

But she, more changeful than a falling leaf  
By the chill blast in Autumn's sapless reign  
Whirl'd from the tree, a sport to all its rage,  
Soon on her husband look'd with alter'd eyes.

A leaf flitting at the mercy of every blast is, indeed, an image of mutability that might readily strike a contemplative mind.

Virgil and Milton employ the same comparison simply with reference to number. Thus the former, to give an idea of the multitude of ghosts which flocked to the bank of the Styx, represents it by that of leaves falling in the woods at the first autumnal frost: and the latter, localizing the scene in his manner, describes  
the

the fallen angels lying entranced in the fiery gulf,

Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades  
High over-arch'd imbrow'r.

*Par. L. i. 312.*

Catullus will supply us with similes in which the more tender and elegant vegetables are made appropriate objects of comparison. Thus, in his poem on the nuptials of Julia and Manlius, the bride is resembled to a Myrtle, which the poet represents as an exotic and delicate shrub.

Floridis velut enitens  
Myrtus Asia ramulis,  
Quos Hamadryades deæ  
Ludicrum sibi roscido  
Nutriunt humore.

As rear'd aloft, its flowery sprays  
The Asian Myrtle fair displays,  
By wood-nymphs as a plaything bred,  
And on the dewy moisture fed.

And in the same piece he compares her future embraces of the beloved bridegroom to those of the Ivy about a tree, in two lines happily descriptive of the habit of this plant:

Ut tenax Hedera huc et huc  
Arborem implicat errans.

As clasping Ivy shoots its sprays  
Around the tree in wanton maze.

In

In another epithalamium Catullus assigns to the separate bands of maidens and youths two contrasted similes, in the first of which a beautiful Flower, and in the second a Vine, are the representatives of a marriageable virgin. The passage is among the choicest relics of ancient Roman poetry. The maidens thus sing:

Ut Flos in septis secretus nascitur hortis,  
 Ignotus pecori, nullo convulsus aratro,  
 Quem mulcent auræ, firmat sol, educat imber,  
 Multi illum pueri, multæ optavere puellæ:  
 Idem quum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,  
 Nulli illum pueri, nullæ optavere puellæ:  
 Sic Virgo dum intacta manet, dum cara suis est.  
 Quum castum amisit polluto corpore florem,  
 Nec pueris jucunda manet, nec cara puellis.

As the fair Flower in some wall'd garden born,  
 Brows'd by no flock, by no rude ploughshare torn,  
 Which showers expand, gales fan, and sunbeams cheer,  
 Shoots up, to many a youth and maiden dear;  
 But when once cropt, its bloom and freshness o'er,  
 Nor youths, nor maids regard their fav'rite more:  
 The Virgin thus, while yet untouch'd and chaste,  
 By all admired, by kindred love embraced,  
 If once a touch impure her body stains,  
 Nor dear to maids, nor wish'd by youths remains,

The youth return the following strain:

Ut vidua in nudo Vitis quæ nascitur arvo  
 Nunquam se extollit, nunquam mitem educat uvam,  
 Sed

Sed tenerum prono deflectens pondere corpus;  
 Jam jam contingit summum radice flagellum,  
 Hanc nulli agricolæ, nulli accollere juvenci :  
 At si forte eadem est Ulmo conjuncta marito,  
 Multi illam agricolæ, multi accollere juvenci :  
 Sic Virgo, dum intacta manet, dum inculta senescit.  
 Quum par connubium maturo tempore adepta est,  
 Cara viro magis, et minus est invisâ parenti.

As in the naked field th' unwedded Vine  
 Nor lifts the head, nor swells with generous wine,  
 But, sinking with its weight, its tallest shoot  
 Reflected bends to meet the distant root ;  
 Unhonour'd, worthless, and forlorn it stands,  
 Untill'd by lab'ring steers or rustic hands ;  
 But should a husband Elm his aid extend,  
 Both lab'ring steers and rustic hinds attend :  
 The Virgin thus, that grew in single state,  
 Neglected, lone, with no protecting mate,  
 In Hymen's equal bands maturely tied  
 Becomes her parent's joy, her lover's pride.

It may be regarded as some defect in this elegant passage, that the Flower is not identified as well as its counterpart, the Vine. Ariosto, in a beautiful version of the first of these similes, (*Orl. Fur.* i. 42,) has supplied the omission by taking the Rose for the example.

The affinity between the Elm and Vine is an obvious parallel to the connubial state, and frequent examples of allusion to it by the poets might be added to that above quoted. Tasso  
has

has represented the circumstance with some novelty of imagery in a simile which he applies to the lamentable fate of the warlike and affectionate pair, Odoardo and Gildippe, who fall together under the fury of the Soldan, the arm of the husband being cut off with which he was supporting his wounded wife.

Come Olmo, a cui la pampinosa pianta  
Cupida s'avvitichi e si marite,  
Se ferro il tronca, o turbine lo scianta,  
Trahe seco a terra la compagna Vite;  
Et egli stesso il verde onde s'ammanta  
Le sfronda, e pesta l'uve sue gradite :  
Par che sen dolga ; e piu che 'l proprio fato  
Di lei gli incresca, che gli more a lato.

*Ger. Lib. xx. 99.*

As when a husband Elm, around whose trunk  
Twines with a fond embrace the fruitful Vine,  
Fell'd by the axe, or by a whirlwind's rage  
Snapt short, to earth his dear companion drags,  
And tears, himself, her verdant mantling sprays,  
And pounds the dulcet clusters : more he seems  
Than for his own, for her sad fate to grieve,  
Who withers at his side.

Homer in a short simile has compared the commotion of a great assembly, to a field of corn waving in the wind :

..... as the rapid West descending shakes  
Corn at full growth, and bends the loaded ears,  
So was the council shaken.

*Il. ii. 147. Cowper.*

Pope,



Pope, endeavouring in his version to improve the picture, supplies the adjuncts of "nodding plumes and groves of waving spears," perhaps recollecting a simile in "Paradise Lost," in which the poet compares the "ported spears" of the angelic squadron hemming in Satan, to ears of corn :

..... thick as when a field  
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends  
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind  
Sways them ; the careful ploughman doubting stands  
Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves  
Prove chaff.

*Par. L. iv. 980.*

A slight circumstance of resemblance is here converted, by the poet's vivid imagination, into a complete rural picture.

## XV.

FROM MAN, HIS CONDITION, OCCUPATIONS, &c.

The actions of men being for the most part the subjects to which similes in poetry are applied, it is not to be expected that, conversely, they should frequently furnish comparisons to other things. We find, however, occasional passages in which human affections or concerns are introduced by way of parallel, and sometimes

times with a very happy effect, on account of the superior interest that will always be attached to pictures in which our own species are the principal figures. In the ancient writers, too, especially in Homer, the allusion by way of simile to various arts and circumstances of common life is a source of much curious information relative to the manners of early times. This class of similitudes, therefore, will be found by no means one of the least worthy of observation. It is, however, liable to a peculiar cause of defect; for, being generally employed to parallel one human occurrence or sentiment by another, the primary and secondary scene often approach too near for that perfection of simile which consists in resemblance contrasted with diversity. Thus where, in the *Iliad*, the lamentation of Achilles over the dead body of Patroclus is compared to that of a father at the funeral of his son, the slight variation of circumstances rather deserves the name of exemplification or illustration than of comparison. The simile is more complete, though trivial, where Minerva, warding off an arrow from Menelaus, is resembled to a mother defending her sleeping infant from the attacks of a fly (*Il.* iv. 130); since there is a change not only  
of

of character and age, but of the object of alarm, and the whole scenery. The same remark is applicable to the simile in which Patroclus, in his grief for the danger of the Grecian fleet, appearing all in tears before Achilles, is likened by that hero to a weeping girl. The picture of the latter is drawn with such pleasing touches of nature that I shall transcribe the passage.

Why weeps Patroclus like an infant girl  
That begs her mother, at whose side she runs,  
To lift her ; pulls her mantle, checks her haste,  
And, weeping, pleads till she at last prevail ?

*Il. xvi. 7. Cowper.*

Another comparison between two cases in which tears are copiously shed is the subject of a simile in the *Odyssey*, which presents, perhaps, the most affecting picture to be met with in all the works of this poet. Ulysses at the Phæacian court, listening to the song of Demodocus, the subject of which is the Trojan war, and the very actions in which he himself was particularly engaged, melts into tears :

..... As when a woman weeps  
Her husband fall'n in battle for her sake,  
And for his children's sake, before the gate  
Of his own city ; sinking to his side  
She close infolds him with a last embrace,  
And gazing on him as he pants and dies,

Shrieks

Shrieks at the sight ; meantime, the ruthless foe  
 Smiting her shoulders with the spear, to toil  
 Command her and to bondage far away,  
 And her cheek fades with horror at the sound :  
 Ulysses, so, from his moist lids let fall  
 The frequent tear. *Odys. viii. 523. Cowper.*

Though nothing can be more perfect than this draught, considered as a piece of pathetic painting, yet it will perhaps be thought that the pathos is too strong for the occasion; the tears of Ulysses flowing from a totally different source from that of the captive widow, and denoting no such anguish of mind.

Tender domestic Joy is beautifully described by Homer in a simile in which it is made the parallel of the feelings of Ulysses on descrying land after swimming two days and nights in the sea.

Precious as to his children seems the life  
 Of some fond father, who hath long endured  
 His adverse demon's rage, by slow disease  
 And ceaseless anguish wasted, till the Gods  
 Dispel at length their fears, and he revives :  
 So grateful to Ulysses' sight appear'd  
 Forests and hills.

*Odys. v. 394. Cowper.*

Here, likewise, is no parity in the circumstances; but the rejoicing in both instances  
 arises

arises from a sense of escape from imminent peril.

Where man is the subject of both parts of a simile, nothing is easier than to convert them. Thus, the feelings of Penelope on the recognition of her long-lost Ulysses are compared to those of shipwrecked mariners on reaching the land :

Welcome as land appears to those who swim,  
Whose gallant bark by winds and rolling waves  
Assail'd, hath perish'd in the boundless main,  
A mariner or two, perchance, escape  
The foamy flood, and swimming, reach the land,  
Weary indeed, and with incrusted brine  
All rough, but oh ! how glad to climb the coast !  
So welcome in her eyes Ulysses seem'd.

*Odyss. xxiii. 233. Cowper.*

The joy of sailors on making the desired land after a long voyage is by Tasso described in a fine simile as a comparison to the emotions which agitated the Christian army on the first distant view of Jerusalem.

Ecco apparir Gierusalem si vede :  
Ecco additar Gierusalem si scorge :  
Ecco da mille voce unitamente  
Gierusalem salutar si sente.

Così di naviganti audace stuolo  
Che mova a ricercar estranio lido,

E in

E in mar dubbioso, e sotto ignoto polo  
 Provi l'onde fallaci, e'l vento infido ;  
 S' al fin discopre il desiato suolo,  
 Il saluta da lunge in lieto grido ;  
 E l'uno al altro mostra, e in tanto obblia  
 La noia e'l mal de la passata via.

*Ger. Lib. iii. 3. 4.*

Behold Jerusalem in prospect lies !  
 Behold Jerusalem salute their eyes !  
 At once a thousand tongues repeat the name,  
 And hail Jerusalem with loud acclaim !

To sailors thus, who, wandering on the main,  
 Have long explored some distant coast in vain,  
 In seas unknown and foreign regions lost,  
 By stormy winds and faithless billows tost,  
 If chance at length th' expected land appear,  
 With joyful shouts they hail it from afar ;  
 They point with rapture to the wish'd-for shore,  
 And dream of former toils and fears no more.

*Hoole.*

If this parallel should appear inexact, inas-  
 much as Jerusalem was not the termination of  
 the labours of the crusaders, like the port to  
 mariners; but rather their crisis; allowance  
 should be made for the feelings of those gallant  
 warriors, who, in the ardour of zeal, and con-  
 fidence of success, regarded as nothing the toils  
 and dangers that remained after they had reached  
 the spot which was the grand object of their  
 aspirations.

Horace

Horace (*Od. 5. l. iv.*) compares the longings of the Roman people for the return of Augustus from a foreign expedition, to those of a mother for the return of her son after a year's absence across the sea; but this, according to a former remark, is rather an exemplification of the same emotion in a different person, than a proper simile. In the following passage of Ariosto, introduced on the sudden appearance of Angelica before her lover Sacripante, the cause and nature of the passion, as well as the subject, are totally different in the two parts of the comparison.

Non mai con tanto gaudio o stupor tanto  
 Levò gli occhi al figliuolo alcuna madre  
 Ch' avea per morto sospirato e pianto,  
 Poi che senz'esso udì tornar le squadre;  
 Con quanto gaudio il Saracin, &c.      *Orl. Fur. i. 53.*

Not with such joy, such wonder, on her Son  
 E'er gaz'd a Mother who with sobs and tears  
 Had wail'd his death, since from the battle-field  
 Without him had return'd the warlike host;  
 As joy'd the Pagan.

The same poet, who has more unborrowed images than perhaps any of the epic successors of Homer, though sometimes whimsically applied, gives a touching sketch from domestic life as a parallel to the manner in which the emperor

emperor Leo was affected towards his foe Ruggiero.

Come bambin, se ben la cara Madre  
Iraconda lo batte, e da se caccia,  
Non ha ricorso alla sorella o al padre,  
Ma a lei ritorna, e con dolcezza abbraccia :  
Così Leon, se ben le prime squadre  
Ruggier gli uccide, e l'altre gli minaccia ;  
Non lo può odiar, perch' all' amor più tira  
L'alto valor, che quella offesa all' ira.

*Orl. Fur. xliv. 92.*

As when some Mother, even in anger mild,  
Chides from her sight, chastis'd, her darling Child,  
The little innocent, with sobbing sighs,  
Nor to the father nor the sister flies,  
But turns to her, and soft in infant charms,  
Hangs at her breast and fondles in her arms :  
So Leon, while he sees Rogero's hand  
O'erthrow the first, and threat each remnant band,  
Joys in his sight ;—for less th' offence can move  
His hatred, than the glorious deeds that prove  
The champion's valour, warm his soul to love. }

*Hoole.*

The resemblance in this simile is forced and fanciful, and the secondary scene is highly discordant with the primary ; yet the picture presented cannot fail to give pleasure from the truth and tenderness of its expression.

Homer, in describing the chase of Hector by Achilles, has just touched upon the inability to fly



fly or pursue which is sometimes fancied in a dream. This thought is amplified by Virgil into a simile descriptive of one labouring under the *Nightmare*, to whom he compares Turnus, foiled in all his attempts to escape from Æneas.

Ac velut in somnis, oculos ubi languida pressit  
Nocte quies, nequidquam avidos extendere cursus  
Velle videmur, et in mediis conatibus ægri  
Succidimus; non lingua valet, non corpore notæ  
Sufficiunt vires, nec vox aut verba sequuntur:  
Sic Turno, &c. Æn. xii. 908.

....as, when heavy sleep has closed the sight  
The sickly fancy labours in the night;  
We seem to run; and destitute of force  
Our sinking limbs forsake us in the course:  
In vain we heave for breath; in vain we cry;  
The nerves unbraced their usual strength deny,  
And on the tongue the faltering accents die:  
So Turnus fared. Dryden.

The force and fidelity of this description will be recognized by every one who has suffered under such an attack. It may be compared with one given by Ariosto, of a frightful and disturbed dream, the awakening from which is resembled to Orlando's sudden recovery of his reason.

Come chi da noioso e grave sonno  
Ove ò vedere abbominevol forme  
Di monstri che non son nè ch'esser ponno,  
O gli par cosa far strana ed enorme,

Ancor si meraviglia poi che donno  
 E fatto de' suoi sensi, e che non dorme :  
 Così, poi che fu Orlando d'error tratto,  
 Restò meraviglioso e stupefatto.

*Orl. Fur. xxxix. 58.*

As one whose sense by noxious dreams opprest  
 Sees horrid forms disturb his broken rest,  
 Monsters unknown ! or in his troubled thought  
 Has some strange deed of dreadful import wrought,  
 E'en when he wakes his phantom fears remain,  
 And still the vision haunts his teeming brain :  
 So when his reason had resum'd her sway,  
 Orlando long in stupid wonder lay.

*Hoole.*

There are three similes in the *Paradise Lost* derived from the actions and affections of men, all of which are marked with the original conception and poetical imagination of the great author, and display his own, or the Homeric manner of forming comparisons into detached pictures. The first is introduced where Satan, arriving at the gate in the wall of Heaven, obtains a sudden prospect of the lower world.

..... As when a Scout  
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone  
 All night, at last, by break of cheerful dawn  
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,  
 Which to his eye discovers unaware  
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land  
 First seen, or some renown'd metropolis

With

With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd,  
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams :  
 Such wonder seiz'd, though after Heaven seen,  
 The Spirit malign.

*Par. L. iii. 543.*

In this fine picture Milton seems to have made a trial of his skill in drawing such bird's-eye views as those which are the distinguished ornaments of *Paradise Regained*. The simile is one of those in which the objects are too nearly identical to claim any merit of ingenious application; indeed, the comparison is properly only an illustration of a conception in the poet's mind.

How much Milton excelled in rural paintings is abundantly shown in his *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, where they constitute the great charm of the poems; but he has nowhere expressed the delight he himself received from country excursions so feelingly as in the simile which he employs to denote the sensations of the Serpent at the sight of Eve in Paradise.

As one who long in populous city pent,  
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,  
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe  
 Among the pleasant villages and farms  
 Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,  
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,  
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;

If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,  
 What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more,  
 She most, and in her look seems all delight:  
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold  
 This flow'ry plat, the sweet recess of Eve.

*Par. L. ix. 445.*

Every reluctant inhabitant of a great town will read these charming lines with strong sympathy, and will probably little regard their adaptation as a simile, which, indeed, is not remarkably happy.

The author appears in his character of a learned admirer of free antiquity in the simile which exhibits a grand comparison of the Serpent preparing himself to practise his rhetoric upon Eve.

As when of old some Orator renown'd  
 In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence  
 Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,  
 Stood in himself collected, while each part,  
 Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,  
 Sometimes in highth began, as no delay  
 Of preface brooking through his zeal of right:  
 So standing, moving, or to highth up grown,  
 The Tempter all impassion'd thus began.

*Par. L. ix. 670.*

With this passage I shall conclude both the present head and the Essay. I am aware that several more similes might be adduced, especially

ally from Homer, in which various occupations and arts are alluded to as objects of comparison ; but those in general are more interesting to the antiquarian than to the critic, possessing little, as poetical adjuncts, either to elevate or embellish the subjects to which they are annexed. Some of them even are so essentially mean and trivial in their associations, that no descriptive powers in the poet can raise them to the level of proper epic dignity. Thus, not all the pomp and artifice of Virgil's language is able to varnish the puerility of his comparison of the agitation of queen Amata under the influence of rage, to the spinning of a top whipped by boys ; and indeed it is only augmenting the contrast to describe such scenes in elaborate and ornamental diction. Pictures of common life which display in a striking manner those passions or affections that belong to human nature in general, may find a place in the noblest species of composition ; but the detail of particular customs or employments often bears an indelible stamp of vulgarity.

Other classes of similes might be added to the preceding, but the number is already sufficient to fulfil the purpose of this Essay. This was, primarily, to show by examples in what the

the use, beauty, and adaptation of simile principally consists; and secondarily, to accumulate a store of some of the most splendid and entertaining passages in poetry, selected and arranged so as to exhibit a series of paintings from nature, comprising the most striking and characteristic circumstances noted by poets under each class of similitudes. If these objects have in a tolerable degree been effected, it would be superfluous to lengthen a paper which has been protracted beyond the space intended to be allotted to it. But it was not easy to restrain the hand from pointing out to observation passages suggested by those immediately preceding, and each contributing something to the completion of the imagery which prior draughts had commenced. With respect to the critical remarks usually annexed to the quotations, I am fully sensible that from the diversity of tastes and feelings, a general concurrence in their justice is not to be expected; but they may perhaps usefully serve to exercise the reader's judgement; and they are submitted to his indulgence.

ON

## POETICAL PERSONIFICATIONS.

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It is well known that the original and etymological conception of the word *Poetry* contains the notion of *making* or creating, indicating a difference between it and common language founded upon an exercise of the invention to produce something new. It might be difficult to exemplify this purpose in every thing that usually bears the name of poetry, any further than as *verse* may be termed an innovation upon prose or common speech ; but the production of novelty, or the creative exertion, is the very essence of that species of invention which consists in the exhibition of new forms of animated beings, endowed with powers and qualities fitting them to become actors in the fable into which they are introduced. Of these fancy-formed agents there are two principal classes : one comprizing those supernatural beings which derive their origin from popular superstition

perstition or philosophical allegory, modified by the poet's imagination, such as the deities of heathen mythology : the other, consisting of creatures of merely poetical parentage, generated by means of the process called *personification* from abstract ideas of the understanding. Of these last, Addison, in one of his elegant papers "On the Pleasures of the Imagination," (Spectator, No. 420,) thus speaks: "There is another sort of imaginary beings that we sometimes meet with in the poets, when the author represents any passion, appetite, virtue, or vice, under a visible shape, and makes it a person or an actor in his poem." To this enumeration, however, should have been added some other abstract ideas personified; such as Nature, Time, Death, Sleep, Fame, and the like, which equally belong to this head of poetical creation. Of such, then, it is the purpose of this Essay to treat; and it is the manner in which these fictitious personages are formed, rather than the propriety of their introduction into the poem, that I mean to consider; not excluding, however, some remarks upon the agency ascribed to them, which, indeed, may be regarded as part of their description and character.



On comparing a number of examples of this kind of personification, it will presently appear that there are two general methods by which it is effected. Either a simply human figure is drawn, strongly impressed with the quality or circumstance intended to be personified; or a creature of the fancy is exhibited, the character of which is expressed by certain typical emblems or adjuncts. The first of these may be termed a *natural*, the second an *emblematical* personification. From the union of these two modes, a third or *mixed* species is produced. That these distinctions may be at once conceived, I shall illustrate them by well known examples. The Passions of Le Brun, in which human faces are marked with vivid expressions of rage, terror, grief, &c., are merely *natural* personifications: the common figure of Fortune, with wings and a bandage over her eyes, and a wheel, is purely *emblematical*: that of Plenty represented by a full-fed cheerful figure bearing a cornucopia, is of the *mixed* species. These illustrations are taken from painting, but the images might equally be depicted by words. In prosecuting the subject I shall adduce under each of the preceding heads a variety of examples from the poets, with such critical

critical remarks as may tend to establish clear and precise notions concerning the requisites for perfection in each several kind. The *natural* species of personification will first be considered ; which by an insensible gradation will slide into the *mixed* ; and the purely *emblematical* will close the survey.

# I.

Before we enter upon the particulars of this section, it may be proper to anticipate a doubt which will readily suggest itself to a reflecting mind. In what, it may be asked, consists the merit or value of a kind of fiction which approaches so nearly to reality ? If Rage, for instance, be depicted solely by the figure of a man in a violent anger, what are the inventive powers exerted ; or what is gained by the personification ? It must be acknowledged that in these cases the praise of *invention*, properly so called, can scarcely be awarded for a draught which must owe its principal merit to an accurate imitation of nature ; yet, since it will be incumbent on the poet to accumulate every circumstance that can throw life and strength into his draught, and to form a general character out of the detached features

features of a number of individuals, to which he must frequently associate scenery and accompaniments calculated to correspond with and enhance the effect of the leading figure, the necessity of a vigorous imagination and superior descriptive talents in order to succeed in such representations is apparent. Then, with respect to the *use* of such fictions, it is to be considered that these imaginary beings are not merely human agents, circumscribed by known laws in their operations: they are a kind of *Genii* or *Powers* whose sphere of action is limited only by a congruity dependent on their several characters. They may therefore be employed by the poet to produce effects beyond the reach of natural means; and may be made to act an important part in that *machinery* which has always been regarded as a capital point of poetical invention. But the truth of these observations will be abundantly elucidated during that investigation of particular examples to which I proceed.

I begin with the personified figure of FAMINE, or, rather, of RAVENOUS HUNGER, as it is represented by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*. The story relates, that Ceres, having vowed revenge against Erisichthon for cutting down a sacred tree,

tree, sends a messenger for this ghastly phantom, who is thus described :

..... Famem lapidoso vidit in agro,  
 Unguibus et raras vellentem dentibus herbas.  
 Hirtus erat crinis ; cava lumina ; pallor in ore ;  
 Labra incana situ : scabræ rubigine fauces :  
 Dura cutis, per quam spectari viscera possent ;  
 Ossa sub incurvis exstabant arida lumbis ;  
 Ventris erat pro ventre locus ; pendere putares  
 Pectus, et a spinæ tantummodo crate teneri :  
 Auxerat articulos macies, genuumque rigeat  
 Orbis, et immodico prodibant tubera talo.

*Met. viii. 799.*

Crouch'd in a stony field he sees the Power  
 Plucking with teeth and nails the scanty herb.  
 Shaggy her hair, her eyes were sunk in pits ;  
 Paleness o'erspread her face ; her whiten'd lips  
 Were hoar with mould ; her mouth was rough with fur ;  
 Through her harsh hide her entrails all were seen ;  
 The arid bones about her crooked loins  
 Stood forth ; a void the belly's place supplied ;  
 Pendent her breast appear'd, and held alone  
 By the bare wickery spine ; the joints enlarged  
 By leanness, made each knee a rigid ball,  
 Each ankle seem a monstrous bunch of bone.

A more striking image of a famished person can scarcely be conceived. The "harsh skin, hanging breasts, crate or basket-work of the ribs and spine, and joints stiffened and apparently enlarged, are circumstances copied from  
 the

the life, and represented with singular force. The figure is, however, perfectly *natural* and merely so. Here are no types or emblems, as, indeed, none were required; for such a subject could not fail of being its own interpreter. The surrounding scenery is painted with equal reality.

Est locus extremis Scythiæ glacialis in oris,  
Triste solum, sterile sine fruge, sine arbore tellus.  
In icy Scythia's furthest bound there lies  
A gloomy, steril, cornless, treeless tract.

The fanciful or preternatural part of the fiction is the manner in which the poet employs his phantom. He makes her take the opportunity while Erisichthon lies asleep, of *inspiring him with herself*, or possessing him, and the poor man awakes with an insatiable hunger, which compels him first, according to the French phrase, *manger son bien*, to eat up his estate, and at last, absolutely to devour himself. There is something ludicrous in the catastrophe, yet the agency of Famine is not unsuitable to her nature. This notion of *inspiring* a quality by touching or breathing upon a person, frequently occurs in the poets as expressive of the action of these fictitious beings.

Churchill's Prophecy of Famine affords a description

scription of this baneful Power formed upon the same natural plan, with few additions except such as suit his purpose of malignant national satire. The following lines, however, contain a happy conception.

With double rows of useless teeth supplied,  
Her mouth from ear to ear extended wide,  
Which, when for want of food her entrails pined,  
She oped, and cursing, swallow'd nought but wind.

The employment of Famine in this poem to utter a prophecy, is suitable enough to the general notion of a Genius, and is rendered locally characteristic by the pretence to second-sight.

The next figure I shall present is that of SLEEP, as it is likewise drawn by the elegant and inventive pencil of Ovid. Though he is elevated to the title and dignity of the god *Somnus*, in form and attributes he is no other than a drowsy mortal, and the poet's invention is principally displayed in the scenery and accompaniments. He inhabits a gloomy cavern, into which the rays of the sun never penetrate, but where a kind of perpetual twilight reigns in the foggy air. Hence all shrill and enlivening sounds are carefully excluded, and an eternal silence prevails, interrupted only by the  
soft

soft murmuring of the waters of Lethe. Around the entrance grow all kinds of soporiferous herbs. The God himself lies fast asleep upon an ebon couch raised high with down. On the approach of Iris, who is sent to him with a message, with much ado he rouses himself. His painful reluctant efforts are very happily expressed in the following lines.

..... Tarda Deus gravitate jacentes  
Vix oculos tollens, iterumque iterumque relabens,  
Summaque percutiens nutanti pectora mento,  
Excussit tandem sibi se; cubitoque levatus  
Quid veniat. .... scitatur.

*Metam.* xi. 618.

The God his heavy eyes scarce lifting up,  
Once and again sunk down, his nodding chin  
Smote on his breast; at length himself he shook  
Out of himself, and on his elbow rais'd,  
Ask'd why she came.

The conceit of shaking himself out of himself is truly Ovidian; and has the unhappy effect of reminding the reader that the *person* is only a *thing*. The poet however has judiciously attended to the character of Sleep in making the matter of request to him as easy and brief as possible. It is only that he would send one of the dreams which are represented as constantly flitting like bats about his cavern on a particular mission. When this business

is

is dispatched, the drowsy deity immediately composes himself to slumber again :

..... rursus molli languore solutum  
Deposuitque caput, stratoque recondidit alto.

His head again in languor soft dissolved,  
He dropp'd, and plunged it in the downy bed.

The original personification of Sleep is in Homer ; who, however, has given it without circumstances or adjuncts. Various poets have since adopted it, and have assigned to the Being a residence, and proper officers and associates. This has been done by Ariosto in his *Orlando Furioso*, with more happiness of invention than by any other writer whom I recollect posterior to Ovid. The attendants on Sleep are particularly well imagined and described.

In questo albergo il grave Somno giace ;  
L' Ozio da un canto, corpulento e grasso ;  
Dall' altro la Pigrizia in terra siede,  
Che non puo andare, e mal si regge in piede ;  
Lo smemorato Oblio sta su la porta ;  
Non lascia entrar, ne riconosce alcuno ;  
Non ascolta imbasciata, ne riporta,  
E parimente tien cacciato ogn'uno.  
Il Silenzio va intorno, e fa la scorta :  
Ha le scarpe di feltro, e'l mantel bruno ;  
Ed a quanti ne incontra di lontano,  
Che non debbian venir cenna con mano.

*Orl. Fur.* xiv. 93.



Here drowsy Sleep has fix'd his noiseless throne,  
Here Indolence reclines with limbs o'ergrown  
Through sluggish ease : and Sloth, whose trembling feet  
Refuse their aid, and sink beneath their weight.  
Before the portal dull Oblivion goes,  
He suffers none to pass, for none he knows.  
Silence maintains the watch and walks the round  
In shoes of felt, with sable garments bound ;  
And oft as any thither bend their pace,  
He waves his hand and warns them from the place.

Hoole.

It is a truly characteristic stroke in Ariosto's narration, that when the command is delivered to Sleep, he makes no reply, but intimates by a sign that the thing shall be done.

The learned and ingenious professor Heyne, in an *Excursus* to the fifth book of Virgil, has enumerated various ways in which Somnus is represented by the poets as producing sleep. Virgil makes him sprinkle the temples of Palinurus with a branch wet with Lethean dew. Some elegantly describe him as lulling to repose by the fanning of his wings ; and one writer gives him a horn out of which he pours sleep like a liquor. Boileau has imitated both Ovid and Ariosto in his personification of *Mollesse* in the "Lutrin:" *Mollesse* is a being compounded of laziness and luxury, for which I know not an adequate name in English. Her abode is

suitably fixed in the dormitory of an abbey. Her attendants are very happily conceived and poetically characterized.

Les Plaisirs nonchalans folatrent alentour.  
 L'un paitrit dans un coin l'embonpoint de chanoines ;  
 L'autre broie en riant le vermillon des moines ;  
 La Volupté la sert avec des yeux devots ;  
 Et toujours la Sommeil lui verse des pavots.

It has been justly, I think, objected to Boileau, that he puts too long a speech into the mouth of this languid personage ; but he was unable to resist a favourable opportunity for some ingenious adulation of Louis XIV. The conclusion however, though closely copied from Ovid, is admirable.

..... La Mollesse oppressée  
 Dans sa bouche à ce mot sent sa langue glacée,  
 Et lasse de parler, succombant sous l'effort,  
 Soupire, étend le bras, ferme l'œil, et s'endort.

Thomson's beautiful poem of "The Castle of Indolence" is an allegory turning entirely upon the personification of INDOLENCE and his antagonist INDUSTRY, and abounds with conceptions similar to those of the writers last mentioned, drest in all the charms of descriptive verse. What can be sweeter and more appropriate than the landscape-painting of the land in which the enchanted castle was seated ?

Was

Was nought around but images of rest ;  
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between ;  
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest,  
From poppies breathed and beds of pleasant green,  
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.  
Meantime unnumber'd glittering streamlets play'd,  
And hurled every where their waters sheen ;  
That as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,  
Though restless still themselves a lulling murmur made.

There is no particular portrait of the enchanter himself, as, indeed, the poet laboured under the difficulty of assigning to him the characteristics of the quality, indolence, and at the same time representing him in action as the "watchful wicked wizard," which the story required him to be—a difficulty that we shall find often attendant on allegorical personification. In the person of his Porter, however, he has sketched a striking figure of one of the family of Somnus.

Waked by the crowd slow from his bench arose  
A comely full-spread Porter swoln with sleep ;  
His calm broad thoughtless aspect breathed repose,  
And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep,  
Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep ;  
While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran,  
Through which his half-waked soul would faintly peep.

*The Knight of Arts and Industry* in this piece, the character contrasted to Indolence, is  
portrayed

portrayed upon the same natural plan, and in figure is no other than a “grave majestic personage in goodly geer arrayed.” The poet expends all his descriptive powers upon the education and mental culture of his hero, and gives no precise image of his exterior.

The “Faery Queen” of Spenser, that inexhaustible store of poetical invention, abounds with allegorical personifications, some of which are of the simple kind we are now considering. Thus the figure of FEAR, in the Masque of Cupid, is merely that of a man entirely possessed with this passion.

Next him (Danger) went Fear all arm'd from top to toe,  
Yet thought himself not safe enough thereby,  
But fear'd each shadow waving to and fro;  
And his own arms when glittering he did spy  
Or clashing heard, he fast away did fly;  
As ashes pale of hue and winged heel'd;  
And evermore on Danger fix'd his eye,  
'Gainst whom he always bent a brazen shield,  
Which his right hand unarmed fearfully did wield.

F. Q. iii. 12.

The vividness of this description affords an example of the characteristic merit of the author. It is scarcely worth while to remark the impropriety of the use of the verb *fear* in this stanza, (Fear fear'd,) except as pointing out that

that tendency to undo a personification by reverting to the term in its abstract sense, which is continually intruding upon this species of fiction. It may seem extraordinary that Collius in his "Ode to Fear" has made little addition to the descriptive part of Spenser's personification, which he has copied inasmuch as it is the natural picture of a person possessed by that passion.

Ah Fear ! ah frantic Fear !

I see, I see thee near ;

I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye ! &c.

In his fine "Ode on the Music of the Passions," however, he has characterized Fear by a striking circumstance, which was probably suggested by Spenser's stanza above quoted.

First Fear his hand its skill to try,

Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,

And back recoil'd, he knew not why,

E'en at the sound himself had made.

The same natural style of painting is adopted by Spenser in the following lines :

And trembling Fear still to and fro did fly,

And found no place where safe he shroud him might.

*F. Q. ii. 7.*

DESPAIR, a passion akin to Fear, is drawn by Spenser with amazing force of pencil under  
the

the form of a man sunk in the deepest melancholy. The whole allegory is so admirable that I shall enter into some detail concerning it, as an example of the most striking conception and judicious management of a poetical fiction any where, perhaps, to be met with. It is contained in the first canto of the Faery Queen, The Legend of Holiness.

The Red-cross Knight, the champion of true Religion, accompanied by his adored Una, is wandering in search of adventures, according to the established practice of the heroes of chivalry; when they meet an armed knight riding full speed, and continually looking behind him, as one who fled from a foe. As he approaches, they descry in his countenance all the marks of the wildest affright and horror. His head is bare, his hair "upstaring stiff," his face bloodless, and about his neck (a shame to knight-hood) hangs a halter. The Redcross Knight stopping him, demands the cause of his "mis-seeming plight." He at first makes no answer;

..... but adding new  
 Fear to his first amazement, staring wide  
 With stony eyes, and heartless, hollow hue,  
 Astonish'd stood as one that had espied  
 Infernal furies with their chains untied.

At

At length he stammers out,

For God's dear love, sir Knight, do me not stay,  
For lo! he comes, he comes fast after me.

He is however detained by force, till he recovers himself so far as to be able to tell his story; from which we learn, that in company with another knight, he had fallen in with the cursed wight Despair; who by his devilish arts had persuaded his comrade to stab himself, and had presented him with a halter for the like purpose of suicide; but that he had exerted himself so far, as to mount his steed and fly. From this narrative the knight of the Red-cross is induced to resolve upon an encounter with this dangerous fiend; and Trevisan, the stranger, consents to show him to the cave, provided he may be then allowed to depart:

For lever would I die, than see his deadly face.

The abode of Despair, with all the dreary and terrific scenery round it, is then painted, in a style which admirably prepares the mind for tragical impressions.

The description of the Being himself follows, which is thus powerfully wrought:

That darksome cave they enter, where they find  
That cursed man low sitting on the ground,

Musing

Musing full sadly in his sullen mind ;  
 His griesly locks long grown, and unbound,  
 Disorder'd hung about his shoulders round,  
 And hid his face, thro' which his hollow eyne  
 Look'd deadly dull, and stared as astound ;  
 His raw-bone cheeks thro' penury and pine  
 Were shrunk into his jaws, as he did never dine.

Beside him lay the corse of his new victim, weltering in his blood, with a rusty knife fixed in his breast. The Red-cross Knight, inflamed with virtuous indignation at the view, threatens revenge on the wicked author of this murder ; but the fiend, instead of showing remorse, or acknowledging guilt, boldly vindicates the deed, and begins a subtle defence of suicide. The knight is somewhat disconcerted with this unexpected turn ; however, he summons arguments to refute those of Despair ; but the artful wretch returns to the charge with so much skill and force, personally attacking his antagonist, and awakening all the stings of conscience within him, that he is at length visibly disturbed, and his manly powers begin to fail. The foe, perceiving his advantage, further presses him with a horrible vision of the pains of hell, awaiting those who continue to accumulate the guilt of transgression ; and observ-  
 ing



ing that his mind was totally subdued by this last assault,

He to him raught a dagger sharp and keen,  
 And gave it him in hand : his hand did quake,  
 And tremble like a leaf of aspen green ;  
 And troubled blood through his pale face was seen  
 To come and go with tidings from the heart,  
 As it a running messenger had been.  
 At last, resolv'd to work his final smart,  
 He lifted up his hand that back again did start.

At this critical moment, his Una, all dismayed, interposes, snatches the fatal weapon from his hand, upbraids him with his want of fortitude, and consoles him with the promise of divine pardon. The knight, restored to himself, mounts his steed, and flies from the accursed place ; by which conclusion the poet seems to intimate, that despair can be withstood only by shunning the thoughts which inspire it.

In this allegory the most impressive effect is produced by means the most simple, and strictly conformable to the character of the agent. It would have been an obvious expedient to have represented Despair as a huge giant armed with a club, and to have imagined a terrible combat between him and the knight. But in that case the reader's attention would have been diverted from

from the real nature of the passion, by the type under which it was veiled ; and how much soever the fancy might have been amused, the understanding would have been much less satisfied, and the feelings less interested. It may indeed be alleged, that as the scene is represented, scarcely any scope is given to allegorical invention ; for that Despair is little more than a gloomy fanatic, such as real life often exhibits, whose terrific denunciations are not unfrequently the cause of suicide. But besides the accumulation of every characteristic circumstance in the personal description, and the assignment of a local habitation which could not belong to a human individual, the conclusion clearly marks the visionary or supernatural quality of the being.

Which when the carl beheld, and saw his guest  
 Would safe depart, for all his subtle sleight,  
 He chose a halter from among the rest,  
 And with it hung himself, unbid, unblest.  
 But death he could not work himself thereby,  
 For thousand times himself he so had drest,  
 Yet natheless it could not do him die,  
 Till he should die his last, that is, eternally.

MELANCHOLY, in its softened character of contemplative pensiveness, is finely pourtrayed by Milton as a religious recluse.

Come

Come, pensive Nun devout and pure,  
 Sober, steadfast and demure,  
 All in a robe of darkest grain,  
 Flowing with majestic train,  
 And sable stole of Cyprus lawn  
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.  
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,  
 With even step and musing gait,  
 And looks commercing with the skies,  
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes :  
 There held in holy passion still  
 Forget thyself to marble, till  
 With a sad leaden downward cast,  
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast.

*Penseroso.*

She is, indeed, invoked as a deity, and a splendid poetical genealogy is framed for her ; but the personal description is merely that of a human figure.

There appears to be something emblematical intended by the following lines ;

Whose saintly visage is too bright  
 To hit the sense of human sight,  
 And therefore to our weaker view,  
 O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue :

Yet it would be thought no extravagant compliment to say the same of a beautiful devotee shrouded in a black veil. And if the poet really conceived of her as a negress, which seems implied

plied in the comparison of prince Memnon's sister, and the Ethiop queen, though I confess it would greatly impair the figure to my imagination, its natural character would not be altered.

On a similar model are formed two elegant sketches of Melancholy, by Warton and Collins. "The Ode to Fancy" of the former describes her as

Goddess of the tearful eye,  
Who loves to fold the arms and sigh :

And in the "Music of the Passions" of the latter, her air and attitude are thus vividly represented :

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,  
Pale Melancholy sat retired.

It may be remarked that the last draught corresponds much more with the elevated cast of Milton's Melancholy, than the mere expression of sadness in the first.

The affinity between this mental affection and RELIGIOUS CONTEMPLATION is such that their personified representatives will scarcely fail to exhibit a family resemblance. Spenser describes a hermitage on the top of a hill, the inhabitant of which is an aged man named *Heavenly Contemplation*. In his portrait, to  
the

the character of enraptured meditation, are added those marks of abstinence and mortification, which render him the exact figure of a devout anchorite.

Great grace that old man given to him had,  
 For God he often saw from heaven's height ;  
 All were his earthly eyen both blunt and bad,  
 And thro' great age had lost their kindly sight,  
 Yet wondrous quick and persant was his spright  
 As eagle's eye that can behold the sun.  
 The hill they scale.....  
 There do they find that godly aged sire,  
 With snowy locks adown his shoulders shed,  
 As hoary frost with spangles doth attire  
 The mossy branches of an oak half dead.  
 Each bone might through his body well be read,  
 And every sinew seen through his long fast ;  
 For nought he cared his carcass long unfed ;  
 His mind was full of spiritual repast,  
 And pined his flesh to keep his body low and chaste.

*F. Q. i. 10.*

The exquisite beauty of the simile adorning this description, will be felt by every one who has the least relish for poetry.

Under an exterior not very different, though without the same extenuation of body, and more calculated to attract the eye, the same poet represents **HYPOCRISY**. In the times of  
 monkery,

monkery, such a figure would doubtless appear rather copied from nature, than the draught of fancy.

At length they chanced to meet upon the way  
 An aged sire, in long black weeds yclad,  
 His feet all bare, his head all hoary gray,  
 And by his belt his book he hanging had ;  
 Sober he seem'd, and very sagely sad,  
 And to the ground his eyes were lowly bent  
 Simple in show, and void of malice bad ;  
 And all the way he prayed as he went,  
 And often knock'd his breast, as one that did repent.

*F. Q. i. 1.*

Hypocrisy has his hermitage too, but its situation is much more snug and comfortable than that of the mortified solitary above mentioned. His conversation is very naturally derived from the legend and breviary.

He told of saints and popes, and evermore  
 He strowed an Avemary after and before.

Spenser has obviously copied this portraiture from that of FRAUD, in Ariosto, which in most of its circumstances is equally a natural one :

Avea piacevol viso, abito onesto,  
 Un' umil vogler d' occhi, un' andar grave,  
 Un' parlar sì benigno, e sì modesto,  
 Che pareo Gabriel, che dicesse Ave !  
 Era brutta, e deforme, in tutto il resto ;  
 Ma nascondea queste fattezze prave

Con

Con lungo abito, e largo ; e sotto quello  
 Attosicato avea sempre il coltello.

*Orl. Fur.* xiv. 87.

Hoole's version of this passage is so inadequate, that I shall give a literal one in prose.

"She had a pleasing countenance, a decent garb, an humble cast of the eyes, a sober gait, a tone of speech so affectionate and modest, that she seemed Gabriel pronouncing the Hail ! in all the rest she was ugly and deformed : but she concealed these misshapen lineaments under a long and wide habit, beneath which she always held an envenomed knife."

The deformities hidden under her long robe, are an emblematical circumstance, which perhaps in strict propriety refer this figure to the class of mixed personifications. The concealed and poisoned dagger is probably meant as a stroke of satire against the religious orders, who, at that period, were freely charged, even by catholics, with crimes perpetrated under the disguise of this habit.

The very beautiful personification of DISCIPLINE, in Cowper's "Task," keeps so closely to the character of an exemplary master of a school or college, that it can scarcely be ranked among poetic fabrications. He is made, however, an individual, not a genus.

..... His

..... His head  
 Not yet by time completely silver'd o'er,  
 Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,  
 But strong for service still and unimpair'd.

His decay and death are also described; and his dissolution makes way for another figure, likewise painted exactly from nature—**IGNORANCE**, who,

His cap well lined with logic not his own,  
 With parrot-tongue perform'd the scholar's part,  
 Proceeding soon a graduated dunce.

Of this latter personage an allegorical representation, but under a natural form, is given by Spenser, who makes him warder of the castle of the giant Orgoglio, the type of papal power. Prince Arthur, after slaying the giant, comes to this castle, which he finds entirely shut and desolate. He calls loudly; and

At last with creeping crooked pace forth came  
 An old old man, with beard as white as snow;  
 That on a staff his feeble steps did frame,  
 And guide his weary gate both to and fro;  
 For his eye-sight him failed long ago:  
 And on his arm a bunch of keys he bore,  
 The which unused, rust did overgrow:  
 Those were the keys of every inner door:

But he could not them use, but kept them still in store.

*F. Q. i. 8.*

These keys are manifestly emblematical of the Scriptures, which Ignorance himself is unable



able to peruse, and keeps locked up from the inspection of others. In the next stanza he is represented as looking backwards while he is advancing forwards; denoting, I suppose, the tendency of Ignorance to revert to ancient errors even while seeming to make progress towards truth. To every question asked him he answers "I cannot tell." The Prince, out of patience with his stupidity, snatches from him the bunch of keys, and opens the doors himself. In this fiction there is, however, a mixture of symbol which properly assigns the figure to the next class.

I shall conclude the head of natural personifications with two figures from Pope's "Rape of the Lock," which have all the air of being drawn from the life. They are the attendants upon the Goddess of Spleen.

Here stood ILL-NATURE, like an ancient maid,  
 Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd;  
 With store of prayers for mornings, nights, and noons,  
 Her hand is fill'd, her bosom with lampoons.  
 There AFFECTATION with a sickly mien,  
 Shows in her cheeks the roses of eighteen;  
 Practis'd to lisp, and hang the head aside,  
 Faints into airs, and languishes with pride;  
 On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,  
 Wrapt in a gown, for sickness and for show.

## II.

The preceding examples will, it is presumed, sufficiently have elucidated the mode of personifying a quality by simply exhibiting a figure impressed with the external marks of its influence. But there are various cases in which this method cannot be so happily applied. The quality or affection may be of too abstracted a nature to display itself intelligibly by external tokens; or it may approach too nearly to the confines of another to admit of a clear discrimination. This is often seen in painting, where the intended expression requires an interpreter to render it obvious to the spectator. In such cases, the association of a *type* or *emblem*, derived from some circumstance of cause or effect, is found of great use for illustration; and besides, such additions, even when not necessary for that purpose, afford scope for the invention and ingenuity of the poet, and contribute to the decoration of his draughts. Hence it has happened that the greater part of allegorical personifications are compounded of natural expressions and symbolical adjuncts; and it is in the proper combination of these, and the preservation of congruity between the natural and  
artificial

artificial characteristics, that the skill and judgment of the poet are peculiarly exercised. We shall have frequent occasion, under the present head, to note the defects in this point of even the greatest masters, when their descriptions are drawn out to minuteness.

Several of the heathen deities, especially of the subordinate ones, are embodied conceptions of this kind. **ERIS**, **STRIFE**, or **CONTENTION**, is thus sketched by the father of heroic poetry :

Ερις αμωτον μεμναια,  
Αρεος ανδροφονοιο κασιγνητη ἑταρη τε,  
'Ητ' ολιγη μεν πρωτα κορυσσεται, αυταρ επειτα  
Ουρανῳ εστηριξε καρη, και επι χθονι βαινει.

*Il.* iv. 440.

..... Insatiate Strife,  
Sister and mate of homicidal Mars,  
Who, small at first, but swift to grow, from earth  
Her towering crest lifts gradual to the skies.

*Cowper.*

By this growing quality is emblematically denoted the property of Strife to swell to a great bulk from small beginnings. Her connexion with the God of War is an obvious piece of allegory. Her rage and fury, “insatiably craving,” (inadequately rendered in the version) is the *natural* part of the portrait.

**DISCORD**, if not absolutely the same with

Strife, differs only as it more expressly implies disagreement between those who were previously united. There are many poetical representations of this character: in the following, sublime and vulgar conceptions are singularly blended.

Infremuere tubæ, ac scisso Discordia crine  
Extulit ad superos Stygium caput; hujus in ore  
Concretus sanguis contusaque lumina flebant.  
Stabant ærati scabra rubigine dentes:  
Tabo lingua fluens, obsessa draconibus ora;  
Atque intortito laceratam pectore vestem,  
Sanguineam tremula quatiebat lampada dextra.

*Petron. Bel. civil.*

The trumpets roar'd, when lo! to upper air  
Discord her Stygian head, with tatter'd locks,  
Uprear'd: her face with curdled blood was black,  
And her bruised eyeballs wept; her brazen teeth  
With rust were furr'd, her tongue distill'd with gore;  
Serpents her face bedeck'd; around her breast  
A ragged robe was wreathed; and in her hand  
Trembling she shook aloft a bloody torch.

Her emerging from hell at the sound of the trumpet is finely conceived and expressed; but the bloody face and bruised weeping eyes present the image of a drunken trull, rather than a Goddess. The rest of the picture is the common one of a Fury. The “ensanguin'd torch” is an instance of that injudicious combination  
of

of emblems which often occurs. The torch is not rendered more formidable as an incendiary instrument by being stained with blood, which circumstance has nothing to do with its appropriate office.

The DISCORD of Ariosto is a very different personage, suited to the style of satirical rather than of heroic poetry. She is found by the archangel Michael, very unexpectedly, in a convent, and is thus characterized.

La conobbe al vestir de color cento,  
Fatta a liste inequali ed infinite,  
Ch'or la coprono, or nò ; che i passi e'l vento  
Le giano aprendo, ch'erano sdrucite.  
I crini avea qual d' oro, e qual d' argento,  
E neri, e bigi, e aver pareano lite.  
Altri in treccia, altri in nastro erano accolti ;  
Molti alle spalle, alcuni all petto sciolti.

Di citatorie piene, e di libelli,  
D' esami, e di carte di procure  
Avea le mani, e il seno, e gran fastelli  
Di chiose, di consiglie e di letture ;  
Per cui le facultà de poverelli  
Non sono mai nelle città sicure.  
Avea dietro, dinanzi, e d'ambi i lati  
Notai, procuratori, ed avvocati.

*Orl. Fur. xiv. 83.*

He knew her by the vesture's hundred dies,  
Of lists unnumber'd, or unequal size,

Which,

Which, rent in shreds, but ill those limbs conceal'd,  
 By every step or breath of wind reveal'd.  
 Her uncomb'd hairs seem'd constant strife to hold,  
 Of various hues, black, silver, brown, and gold ;  
 Some hung in ringlets, some in knots were tied ;  
 Her bosom some, and some her shoulders hide.  
 Her hands and lap a countless medley bore  
 Of writs, citations, an exhaustless store,  
 Oppression's various forms, that make the poor  
 In cities never find their state secure.  
 Before, behind, on either side her, stand  
 Attorneys, notaries, a brawling band.

*Hoole.*

The figure of Discord is here formed upon the idea of her *being at variance with herself*. This notion, however, is carried much further by Spenser, in a long description of the same personage under the title of *Até*, framed in the most studied allegorical manner, and overcharged with emblem (*F. Q.* iv. 1.) Her dwelling is near the gates of hell, and has many ways leading into it, but none out again, for

Discord harder is to end than to begin.

The ornaments of her house are very poetically described as exhibiting the relics of every thing in antiquity once great and flourishing, which Discord has brought to ruin. Around the mansion, the ground is encumbered with “wicked weeds,” which she herself had raised  
from

from the "seeds of evil words and factious deeds." These yield an abundant crop of troubles and contentions, upon which Até feeds, as her daily bread. Her figure is wonderfully strange and monstrous, being a compound of parts ill-sorted and repugnant to each other. Squinting eyes, a divided tongue and heart, feet and hands ill-matched and acting in opposite directions, make up a form that could not exist, and which therefore offends against the rules of just personification. Poets may be permitted to combine parts and properties which nature never really joined, but there must be no manifest inconsistency in the union.

The FURIES may certainly be regarded as allegorical personages: they are frequently met with in poetry, but the distinct office and character of each are not clearly marked out. Sometimes they are the instruments of divine vengeance for dreadful crimes, in which case they represent Horror and Remorse: often, a fit of phrensy is denoted by the fiction of being possessed by the Furies, as it has been by a diabolical possession in later times. Universally, their agency is something highly terrible and baneful to mankind; which is imaged by their ghastly countenances, their serpents, torches,  
and

and bloody scourges. I shall here consider only a single example of this fiction, the celebrated apparition of Alecto in the seventh book of the *Æneid*.

Alecto, in this place, may, I think, with perfect propriety be regarded as the personified dæmon of HATRED, or REVENGE. The purpose of her mission is to inspire Turnus and the mother of Lavinia with hostile rage against Æneas, whose arrival had disconcerted the plan of an union between the Latin and Rutulian regal families. No occasion could be more likely to rouse a spirit of hatred, and thirst for revenge, in the disappointed persons, especially in Turnus, whose dearest hopes were thus frustrated by a stranger. The Furies are painted so much alike in their mischievous powers and inclinations that they are not easily discriminated; but the character of Alecto, as given by Virgil, corresponds with the idea of a being whose office it was to stir up all the malignant passions in the human breast.

..... cui tristia bella,  
Iræque, insidiæque et crimina noxia cordi.

.....  
Tu popes unanimos armare in prælia fratres,  
Atque odiis versare domos : tu verbera tectis

Funereasque



Funereasque inferre faces : tibi nomina mille,  
Mille nocendi artes.

This Fury fit for her intent she chose,  
One who delights in wars and human woes.

.....  
'Tis thine to ruin realms, o'erturn a state, }  
Betwixt the dearest friends to raise debate, }  
And kindle kindred blood to mutual hate. }  
Thy hand o'er towns the funeral torch displays,  
And forms a thousand ills, a thousand ways.

*Dryden.*

The fiery and malignant spirit of Revenge seems emblematically indicated by the means she employs to effect her mischievous purpose. She drives Amata to madness by throwing on her one of her serpents, which infects the queen with its venom,

..... vipeream inspirans animam :

Breathing a viper's soul :

and appearing to Turnus in his sleep, she hurls at him her torch, and fixes its black fires in his breast. She afterwards sounds the horn which summons the rustics to arms.

ENVY is a personage frequently introduced by the poets, who have given many descriptions of her, all indeed copies from the same model or from each other. The earliest of these is in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, b. ii. where she

is

is employed like a Fury, by Minerva, to infect the mind of Aglauros. The description is partly natural, partly emblematical. She is represented as dwelling in a cave, situated in a cold, dark valley; where she is found chewing the flesh of vipers, which may be interpreted, feeding on malignant thoughts,

..... vitiorum alimenta suorum :

The aliment of her vices.

Her gait is sluggish, her countenance pale; her body emaciated: she looks askance; her breast is suffused with gall; and her tongue drops poison. She never smiles, but at mischief; she is sleepless through anxiety; she pines at the view of prosperity, and suffers as much evil as she inflicts. This is little more than the natural description of a person under the dominion of envy, the bodily effects of which corroding affection are almost literally to envenom the juices, and cause a superabundance of acrid bile. It is a touch of nature, too, that she is represented as sighing deeply at the view of Minerva's beauty and splendour; and as scarcely forbearing to weep whilst she passes over the flourishing city of Athens. Her thorny staff is a symbol of the personal stings which attend

attend envious affections. The blight and desolation of the subjacent earth wherever she takes her flight denote the baleful effects of this passion upon society.

..... baculum capit, quod spinea totum  
Vincula cingebant : adopertaque nubibus atris,  
Quacumque ingreditur, florentia proterit arva,  
Exuritque herbas, et summa cacumina carpit;  
Afflatuque suo populos, urbesque, domosque  
Polluit.

She takes her staff, with thorny wreaths begirt,  
And, veil'd in murky clouds, where'er she goes  
Beats down the springing corn, the verdant herbs  
Withers, and every flowering summit blights ;  
And thro' the peopled towns and dwellings breathes  
Her foul contagion.

Her mode of infecting the unhappy Aglauros is by stroking her breast with her infected hands, and inserting her crooked thorns.

There are two descriptions of ENVY, in the Fairy Queen, both of them loathsome and disgusting, and, though obviously imitated from that of Ovid, less distinct and consistent as allegories. The only additional circumstance that appears to me worth remarking, is, that the garment of Envy is painted as full of eyes; an emblem, probably, of the sharp-sightedness of envious persons in detecting the faults of their neighbours.

Cowley,

Cowley, in his "Davideis," gives a portrait of Envy, drawn with much strength and some novelty.

Envy at last crawls forth from that dire throng,  
Of all the direfull'st ; her black locks hung long,  
Attired with curling serpents ; her pale skin  
Was almost dropt from the sharp bones within ;  
And at her breast hung vipers, which did prey  
Upon her panting heart both night and day,  
Sucking black blood from thence, which to repair  
Both day and night they left fresh poisons there.  
Her garments were deep stain'd in human gore,  
And torn by her own hands, in which she bore  
A knotted whip, and bowl, that to the brim  
Did with green gall and juice of wormwood swim.

Garth has bestowed some labour on a similar description, in his "Dispensary," but his fancy has added little to the established imagery. Indeed, poetical invention seems to have been soon exhausted in the personification of this being, and to have reached no further than a composition of spite and misery marked by emblems of the most repulsive kind.

PRIDE is by Spenser represented as a queen sitting on a gorgeous throne, and decorated with every appendage of regal pomp.

So proud she shined in her princely state ;  
Looking to heaven, for earth she did disdain ;

Lo !

Lo ! underneath her scornful feet was lain  
A dreadful dragon, with a hideous train ;  
And in her hand she held a mirror bright,  
Wherein her face she often viewed fain,  
And in her self-lov'd semblance took delight ;  
For she was wondrous fair as any living wight.

Of griesly Pluto she the daughter was,  
And sad Proserpina, the queen of hell ;  
Yet did she think her peerless worth to pass  
That parentage, with pride so did she swell,  
And thund'ring Jove that high in heaven doth dwell,  
And wield the world, she claimed for her sire,  
Or if that any else did Jove excel ;  
For to the highest she did still aspire. *F. Q.*

The royalty of pride is an essential circumstance in the moral allegory to which this portraiture belongs. The manners and disposition ascribed to her, are those which are natural to a proud character. The delight, indeed, which she takes in viewing herself in the mirror she bears, may be thought more characteristic of Vanity, according to the usual distinction made between these kindred affections ; but it must be confessed that a specific difference between them cannot easily be established, and that self-admiration belongs equally to both. Spenser afterwards represents Vanity as the usher or master of the ceremonies to Pride ; which is a circumstance very aptly imagined ; for the  
internal

internal sentiment of Pride is nourished by the externals supplied by Vanity. The dragon on which this lofty dame sets her foot is emblematical of the high spirit of pride, which loves to triumph over and subjugate the fiercest natures. It is the “*debellare superbos*” of the haughty Roman. Her transcendent beauty may denote the excellence which often affords a real foundation for this affection. Her parentage from the rulers of the infernal regions, is conformable to the elevated but dark and unamiable character of this passion, which another mythology derives from the “Prince of Darkness.”

DISDAIN, an affection related to Pride, but compounded with defiance and contempt, is represented by Spenser under the figure of a fierce giant.

..... He was stern and terrible by nature,  
And eke of person huge and hideous.

.....

His looks were dreadful, and his fiery eyes,  
Like two great beacons, glared far and wide,  
Glancing askew, as if his enemies

He scorned in his overweening pride,  
And stalking stately like a crane did stride  
At every step upon the tiptoes high;  
And all the way he went, on every side

He

He gazed about and stared horribly,  
As if he with his looks all men would terrify.

He wore no armour, he for none did care,  
As no whit dreading any earthly wight,  
But in a jacket quilted richly-rare  
Upon check laton, he was strangely dight;  
And on his head a roll of linen plight,  
Like to the Moors of Malabar he wore,  
With which his locks, as black as pitchy night,  
Were bound about, and voided from before,  
And in his hand a mighty iron club he bore.

*F. Q. vi. 7.*

Of this description part is natural, part emblematical. The expression of his countenance, his gait and gestures, are those of a man under this emotion. His huge bulk and terrific semblance allegorically represent its lofty and ferocious nature. The presumptuous confidence of a disdainful mind is denoted by the rejection of all defensive armour. He is attired as a Moor, probably in allusion to the character of a Mahometan or Pagan in the old romances, who is usually made a boastful and arrogant defier. Thus Shakespear, combining the figures of a giant and a Moor, says,

..... the gates of monarchs  
Are arch'd so high that giants may jet thro'  
And keep their impious turbands on.

*Cymbeline.*

In

In another place (*F. Q.* ii. 7.) Spenser paints Disdain under the form of a stern giant, the keeper of the gate of Philotime, the daughter of Mammon. Smollet, in his "Ode to Independence," gives a spirited sketch of Disdain as the allegorical father of Independence by a rape on the Goddess Liberty.

..... A bold savage pass'd that way,  
 Impell'd by destiny, his name Disdain.  
 Of ample front the portly chief appear'd,  
 The hunted bear supplied a shaggy vest;  
 The drifted snow hung on his yellow beard,  
 And his broad shoulders braved the furious blast.

To this portrait, however, he has assigned no moral features. It is that of a mere savage, undistinguished by any attributes which entitle him to his appellation. It may be said, indeed, that the act which he ascribes to him sufficiently implies that disregard of all laws but those of nature which fits him to be one of the parents of Independence; but this kind of brutality of itself scarcely amounts to a discrimination of the quality in question.

SCORN, which plays a sort of underpart to Disdain, as Vanity does to Pride, is associated with it in one of Spenser's allegories. A proud hard-hearted lady is punished by falling into the

the



the hands of Disdain and Scorn; the first of whom, the personage whose description has already been quoted, leads her on her palfrey through thick and thin; while the latter following in the rear, in the habit of a fool, lashes her forwards.

But that same Fool, which most increas'd her pains,  
Was Scorn, who having in his hand a whip,  
Her therewith yorks, and still when she complains,  
The more he laughs, and does her closely quip  
To see her so lament and bite her tender lip.

*F. Q. vi. 7.*

The Fool, under whose figure Scorn is represented, was undoubtedly a similar conception with that which so often occurs in Shakspeare, and the other old dramatists; a compound of fantastic garb and manners and sarcastic shrewdness. His ignoble character is well suited to the usual meanness of scornful expression. His whip is a proper emblematical instrument for inflicting those strokes which are more teasing and painful than dangerous. There is the same metaphor in "Hamlet:"

For who would bear the whips and scorns o' th' time?

Thomson has employed the personified figure of Scorn in his "Castle of Indolence," in a similar office with that assigned him by Spenser

—that of a petty tormentor; but the portraiture is merely moral.

The other was a fell despiteful fiend,  
 Hell holds none worse in baleful bower below ;  
 By pride, and wit, and rage, and rancour keen'd ;  
 Of man alike, if good or bad, the foe :  
 With nose upturn'd he always made a show  
 As if he smelt some nauseous scent ; his eye  
 Was cold and keen, like blast from boreal snow ;  
 And taunts he casten forth most bitterly.

*Cant. ii. 7.*

This person, it may be remarked by the way, would be no unapt representation of those literary critics, whose principal object is to amuse themselves and their readers by ludicrous exposures of defects, while they display the coldest insensibility to excellencies.

Shakespear has strongly depicted Scorn, by a single attitude :

.....To make me  
 A fixed figure for the hand of Scorn  
 To point his slow unmoving finger at.

*Othello.*

WRATH is drawn with wonderful force by Spenser, as one of the counsellors and attendants of Pride.

And him besides rides fierce revenging Wrath  
 Upon a lion loth for to be led ;  
 And in his hand a burning brand he hath,  
 The which he brandishes about his head ;

His

His eyes did hurl forth sparkles fiery red,  
 And stared stern on all that him beheld,  
 As ashes pale of hue and seeming dead ;  
 And on his dagger still his hand he held,  
 Trembling through hasty rage when choler in him swell'd.  
 His ruffian raiment all was stain'd with blood  
 Which he had spilt, and all to rags y'rent.

*F. Q. i. 4. 33.*

In this description there is nothing properly emblematical except the lion on which Wrath is mounted, and the flaming brand with which he is armed—symbols too obvious to require remark. The sparkling of his eyes, if not more probably copied from nature, might be suggested by Virgil's picture of Turnus in a paroxysm of rage.

His agitur furiis, totoque ardentis ab ore  
 Scintillæ absistunt : oculis micat acribus ignis.

*Æn. xii.*

Such furies urge him ; whilst his burning face  
 Darts sparkles round, and flash his fiery eyes.

Armstrong may seem to have borrowed from Spenser's portrait the following spirited lines, though they also are natural enough to have been taken from the life.

For pale and trembling Anger rushes in,  
 With faltering speech and eyes that wildly stare.

*Preserv. Health.*

In another part of the "Faery Queen," a personage of the same family is introduced,

whom the poet calls **FUROR**, and paints as a man absolutely frantic with rage. The whole description is strong and natural ; but I shall quote nothing from it except the picture of the madman bound by Sir Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, which exhibits all the vivid colouring peculiar to this great master.

With hundred iron chains he did him bind,  
 And hundred knots, that did him sore constrain ;  
 Yet his great iron teeth he still did grind,  
 And grimly gnash, threat'ning revenge in vain :  
 His burning eyes, which bloody streaks did stain,  
 Stared full wide, and threw forth sparks of fire ;  
 And more for rank despatch, than for great pain,  
 Shak'd his long locks, colour'd like copper wire,  
 And bit his tawny beard, to shew his raging ire.

*F. Q.* ii. 4.

Even this, however, is little more than an amplification of a very noble passage in Virgil relative to the same personified passion.

..... Furor impius intus  
 Sæva sedens super arma, et centum vinctus ahenis  
 Post tergum nodis, fremit horridus ore cruento.

*Æn.* i.

Within the fane dire Fury shall be bound,  
 With a huge heap of shatter'd arms around ;  
 Wrapt in an hundred chains, beneath the load  
 The fiend shall roar, and grind his teeth in blood.

*Pitt.*

In

In most of the examples of mixed personifications hitherto adduced, the emblematical action has been made sufficiently congruous with the natural, and the fancied being has been employed in a manner suitable to the character of which he is the representative. But in the following picture, occasion is given to remark a defect in this point, which is a frequent attendant on allegory.

GRIEF, all in sable sorrowfully clad,  
Down hanging his dull head, with heavy cheer,  
Yet inly being, more than seeming sad :  
A pair of pincers in his hand he had,  
With which he pinched people to the heart.

*F. Q.* iii. 12.

The three first lines in this description represent a man overwhelmed with sorrow ; but the two last represent him as a tormentor of others. Now these are incongruous ideas. Grief is a passive affection. It subdues the mind, and peculiarly unfits it for any active exertion ; nor, indeed, does it usually inspire any wish of inflicting sufferings on others. In the personification, Grief is himself the man “ pinched at the heart ;” and it required the creation of a different being to act as an executioner.

The allegory of CARE, by the same poet,  
(*F. Q.*

(*F. Q.* iv. 5.) has been much admired, as, indeed, from the strength of the imagery it well deserves to be; yet it is not free from the defect above noted. Care is represented as a blacksmith by trade; and the minute description of him in this character may vie in force and accuracy of painting with the most laboured pictures of the Flemish school. Like them, indeed, it does not reject disgusting circumstances, when they present themselves as part of the copy from nature. At the close, it is said that he worked night and day,

But to small purpose iron wedges made :  
Those be unquiet thoughts that careful minds invade.

Here is a breach in the allegory; for although a toil-worn mechanic may be a proper representative of Care, yet the fabrication of iron wedges affords no similitude to the thoughts which spring involuntarily in the bosom of Care. The same incongruity appears in the progress of the fable. That the sleep of Sir Scudamore should be broken by the hammering of the blacksmith and his six servants is very natural; but they act quite out of character when the men rap him on the head with their hammers as soon as he falls into a slumber, and the master pinches him on the side with his red-hot  
tongs.

tongs. By a similar confusion of the literal and allegorical sense, the bellows are said to be *sighs*, blown by the *wind of pensiveness*.

Spenser, in another allegory, with propriety stations Care as a watchman at the entrance of the house of Riches.

Before the door sat self-consuming Care,  
Day and night keeping wary watch and ward.

*F. Q. ii. 7.*

Hawkesworth, in an ingenious but melancholy piece entitled "Life, an Ode," gives a picture of Care which is a merely natural personification.

Who art thou with anxious mien  
Stealing o'er the shifting scene ?  
Eyes with tedious vigils red,  
Sighs by doubts and wishes bred,  
Cautious step and glancing leer,  
Speak thy woes and speak thy fear.

He then exhibits the exact parallel of this figure, as walking arm in arm with him, and names the couple,

*Manhood*, linked by fate with *Care*.

Though there is moral justness of thought in this conception (which, however, seems borrowed from Parnell's "Allegory on Man,")  
yet

yet it must be owned that it betrays a barrenness of invention, to make the natural and allegorical figure mere counterparts to each other.

DANGER not being a quality inherent in a subject, but implying a relation to something else, the best mode of personifying it may be a matter of doubt. Spenser represents it under the form of a *dangerous man*, prepared for and meditating mischief.

With him went Danger, cloth'd in ragged weed,  
 Made of bear's skin, that him more dreadful made.  
 Yet his own face was dreadful, ne did need  
 Strange horror to deform his griesly shade:  
 A net in th' one hand, and a rusty blade  
 In th' other was: this mischief, that mishap;  
 With th' one his foes he threat'ned to invade;  
 With th' other he his friends meant to enwrap;  
 For whom he could not kill, he practis'd to entrap.

F. Q. iii. 12.

This is altogether a natural figure: though a difference between open and secret danger seems typified by the two instruments of harm, a sword and a net: why one should be employed against foes and the other against friends is not, however, obvious. The net was doubtless suggested to the poet by the Retiarius of the Roman amphitheatre; who is expressly  
 alluded



alluded to by Thomson where he arms his Knight of Arts and Industry with both these weapons.

In Spenser's beautiful allegory of the Temple of Venus (*F. Q.* iv. 10.) another picture of Danger is given, under the form of a hideous giant stopping the entrance of the gate of Good Desert. This is likewise an *author of danger*; and in conformity with the maxim that it is safer boldly to confront a menacing object, than to retreat from it, he is made soon to give way to the knight who prepares to assail him. His hind parts are said to be still more ugly and terrific than his front;

For Hatred, Murder, Treason, and Despight,  
With many more lay in ambushment there,  
Awaiting to entrap the wareless wight.

In what manner these phantoms composed a part of him is not explained; but they are evidently introduced to denote that concealed danger is more to be dreaded than open. Suckling has a pretty image to elucidate the nature of danger, as being most formidable when viewed at a distance.

Danger, thou dwarf drest up in giant's clothes,  
That show'st far off still greater than thou art.

It is still in the same active character that  
Shakespear

Shakespear conceives of this Being in the rant which he puts into the mouth of Cæsar :

..... Danger knows full well  
That Cæsar is more dangerous than he.  
We were two lions litter'd in one day,  
And I the elder and more terrible.

*Jul. Cæs.*

Collins, however, who introduces the figure of Danger in his "Ode to Fear," blends the ideas of a person exposed to danger, and causing it; and a confusion of imagery is the result.

Danger, whose limbs of giant mold  
What mortal eye can fixt behold ?  
Who stalks his round, a hideous form,  
Howling amidst the midnight storm ;  
Or throws him on the ridgy steep  
Of some loose hanging rock to sleep.

Danger, as a gigantic figure, terrible to the sight and hearing, is well calculated to excite the emotion of personal fear; but he is not more the object of terror for lying on the edge of a rock; on the contrary, any hazard to which *he* is exposed, lessens the apprehensions which he inspires.

PAIN is most naturally represented under the figure of a person suffering extreme agony; and it is upon this idea in general that the following highly poetical description of this Being  
by

by Akenside is formed ; though an incongruous mixture may be discerned in it.

..... Looking up I view'd  
 A vast gigantic spectre striding on  
 Through murmuring thunders, and a waste of clouds,  
 With dreadful action. Black as night his brow  
 Relentless frowns involved. His savage limbs  
 With sharp impatience violent he writhed,  
 As through convulsive anguish ; and his hand,  
 Arm'd with a scorpion-lash, full oft he raised  
 In madness to his bosom ; while his eyes  
 Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook  
 The void with horror. *Pleas. Imag.*

Eyes flowing with tears, limbs writhing with torture, and loud exclamations, give an expression very different from frowns and menacing gestures ; for there is no proper connexion between suffering pain, and the desire of inflicting it. The allegory, indeed, required not a passive but an active being ; yet the natural representation of Pain coincides rather with the former than the latter. It is in such a case that emblems are particularly useful, since by their means a figure may be rendered intelligible where it cannot properly be made the *subject* of the quality or circumstance personified. The scorpion-lash in the preceding description is an emblem, but not of itself sufficient to identify the

the character. It is obviously borrowed from the speech of Death to Satan in "Paradise Lost:"

Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue  
Thy lingering.

SUSPICION is thus personified by Spenser:

But he was foul, ill-favoured and grim,  
Under his eyebrows looking still askance,  
And ever as Dissemblance laugh'd on him,  
He loured on her with dangerous eye-glance,  
Shewing his nature in his countenance;  
His rolling eyes did never rest in place,  
But walk'd each where for fear of hid mischance,  
Holding a lattice still before his face,  
Through which he still did peep as forward he did pace.

*F. Q. iii. 12.*

In this portrait there is nothing emblematical except the lattice carried by the figure, which is a symbol familiarized by the customs of various nations. The louring of Suspicion at the smiles of his companion Dissimulation, and his half-hid ever-rolling eyes, are well conceived and strongly painted.

DOUBT is considered by Spenser as an affection of mind very similar to Suspicion, but without the malignity of the latter. He has given two portraitures of him, both in the mixed style of personification. In the first he is a figure in the "Masque of Cupid."

Next

Next after him went Doubt, who was y-clad  
 In a discolour'd coat of strange disguise,  
 That at his back a broad capuccio had,  
 And sleeves dependant, Albanese-wise :  
 He look'd askew with his mistrustful eyes,  
 And nicely trod, as thorns lay in his way,  
 Or that the floor to shrink he did avyse :  
 And on a broken reed he still did stay  
 His feeble steps, which shrunk when hard thereon he lay.

*F. Q. iii. 12.*

In this picture I do not clearly perceive the meaning of the strange dress, with its large cape and hanging sleeves. Perhaps it alludes to some known dramatic character, like that of Pantaloon in pantomimes. The broken staff on which he leans is objected to by Spence, as an emblem not sufficiently significant. It would not, indeed, be so of itself; but as an accompaniment it seems aptly enough to point out the unstable character of Doubt.

Spenser's other representation of this personage is in his allegory of the "Temple of Venus," in which Sir Scudamore relates his conquest of the fair Amoret. The knight, after passing a drawbridge, comes to a castle-gate, where he repeatedly knocks and calls.

Till at the last I spy'd within the same  
 Where one stood peeping through a crevis small,  
 To whom I call'd aloud, half angry there withal.

That

That was to weete, the porter of the place,  
 Unto whose trust the charge thereof was lent;  
 His name was Doubt, that had a double face,  
 The one forward looking, the other backward bent,  
 Therein resembling Janus ancient,  
 Which hath in charge the ingate of the year:  
 And evermore his eyes about him went,  
 As if some proved peril he did fear,  
 Or did misdoubt some ill whose cause did not appear.

*F. Q. iv. 12.*

This portrait would perhaps be fully as applicable to Vigilance or Watchfulness as to Doubt, but the latter quality was more to the poet's purpose in the construction of his allegory.

A personification of JEALOUSY is given by Spenser, which is remarkable for a kind of metamorphosis so managed that the real figure of a jealous man changes almost imperceptibly into a phantom or preternatural being. The wife of the old Malbecco having eloped from him, he follows her into the woods, where she is passing her time to her satisfaction among the satyrs. Unable to prevail upon her to return with him, and finding himself in the meantime pillaged of a buried treasure, he falls into a fit of phrensy and despair, in which he throws himself from the brow of a rock over-hanging the

the sea. But he was so wasted with care and trouble, that nothing of substance was left in him, so that he received no harm from the fall. He crawls up among the cliffs, and finds a cavern, in which he fixes his residence in darkness, and under continual apprehension lest the rock should bury him beneath its ruins. He never dares sleep, but perpetually listens to the beating of the billows against his cave.

There dwells he ever, miserable swain !

Hateful both to himself and every wight ;

Where he through privy grief and horror vain

Is waxen so deform'd that he has quite

Forgot he was a man, and Jealousy is hight :

*F. Q.* iii 10.

There is much fancy in this picture ; and the unquiet state of a jealous mind is strongly expressed by the emblem of this wretch's constant dread of the fall of his over-hanging rock. The manner and conclusion of the metamorphosis much resemble that of the nymph *Echo*, in Ovid, *Metam.* iii.

**SPLEEN**, a compound affection of low spirits and ill-humour, better known formerly by the name than at present, is immortalized in poetry. She acts a conspicuous part in the machinery of the "Rape of the Lock ;" yet her figure is but slightly sketched in that poem.

Here

Here in a grotto shelter'd close from air,  
 And screen'd in shades from day's detested glare,  
 She sighs forever on her pensive bed,  
 Pain at her side and Megrim at her head.

This is a merely natural representation ; in which a little inaccuracy may be remarked, in making Pain and Megrim two distinct persons, whereas the latter is only headach. Mr. Hayley, who has ventured to take up a subject touched by the hand of so great a master, besides furnishing the *Cave of Spleen* with a variety of new figures, has given a portraiture of the Genius of the place, formed on a different model :

High on an ebon throne superbly wrought  
 With each fierce figure of fantastic thought,  
 In a deep cave where no bright beam intrudes,  
 O'er her black schemes the sullen Empress broods.  
 The shriekowl's mingled with the raven's plume  
 Shed o'er her furrow'd brows an awful gloom ;  
 A garb that glows with stripes of lurid flame,  
 Wraps in terrific pomp her haggard frame ;  
 Round her a serpent as a zone is roll'd,  
 Which writhing stings itself in every fold.

*Triumphs of Temp.* c. iii.

This representation is almost wholly emblematical, and the symbols are both novel and appropriate.

That



That most original and witty poem on "the Spleen," by Green, though it abounds in figure and imagery, presents few ideas proper for a portraiture of the phantom against whose visits it is his purpose to guard us. The magic-lantern which he puts into her hand is, however, a very apt and ingenious emblem of her mode of acting upon the mind :

When by her magic-lantern Spleen  
With frightful figures spread life's scene.

Among the inmates of the Cave of Spleen Mr. Hayley fitly places PEEVISHNESS, whom he thus paints :

Here like a dame of quality array'd  
Sits Peevishness presiding o'er the shade,  
And frowning at her own uncomely mien,  
Whose coarse reflection on the wall is seen.  
A snarling lap-dog her right hand sustains ;  
Her lap an infant porcupine contains,  
Which, while her fondness tries its wrath to still,  
Wounds her each moment with a pointed quill.

The circumstance of her frowning at her ugly shade on the wall is original and characteristic, and her pet animals are well chosen.

But the reader will perhaps think that there has been a sufficient exhibition of horrid and disgusting figures : I shall therefore conclude this section with a few of a different character.

PEACE is represented by Tibullus either as a rural maid, or as a Goddess presiding over rustic operations.

.... nobis, Pax alma, veni, spicamque teneto,  
Perfluat et pomis candidus ante sinus.

.....  
..... Pax arva colat : Pax candida primum  
Duxit araturos sub juga curva boves.  
Pax aluit vites, et succos condidit uvæ,  
Funderet ut nato testa paterna merum.

L. i. el. 10.

Come, bounteous Peace ! and hold the spiky ear,  
While thy white lap with fragrant fruit o'erflows.

.....  
Let Peace enrich the plains : fair Peace, 't was thine  
To bow the oxen to their rural task ;  
To nurse the grape, and store the new-prest wine  
For sons to ripen in their fathers' cask.

There is more of portrait, and a higher style of imagery, in a very elegant representation of Peace by Milton in his juvenile but singularly poetical "Christmas Hymn."

But he, her fears to cease,  
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace ;  
She crown'd with olive-green came softly sliding  
Down through the turning Sphere,  
His ready harbinger,  
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing ;  
And waving wide her myrtle wand,  
She strikes an universal peace thro' sea and land.

The

The use of the word *peace* in its literal sense in the same passage with its personification, is an inaccuracy of which an example has already been pointed out from Spenser.

I am acquainted with no addition by other poets to the imagery in the preceding quotations, though peace is so often celebrated by them.

MERCY is depicted by Spenser as a potent queen, surrounded with all the splendour of majesty, yet tempered with benignity. It is, indeed, to be understood, that the courtly poet designs his *Mercilla* as a type of queen Elizabeth. The description of her attire may have given a hint of that of Raphael in *Paradise Lost*.

All over her, a cloth of state was spread;  
Not of rich tissue or of cloth of gold,  
Nor of aught else that may be richest read,  
But like a cloud as likest may be told  
That her broad spreading wings did wide enfold;  
Whose skirts were border'd with bright sunny beams,  
Glistening like gold among the plights enroll'd,  
And here and there shooting forth silver streams,  
'Mong which crept little angels through the glittering gleams.

F. Q. v. 9.

She bears a sceptre, and before her lies a sword rusted through long disuse. Under her

feet a huge lion is chained, which is not rendered so tame, but that

Yet did he murmur with rebellious sound,  
And softly royne, when salvage choler did abound.

The emblematical part of this portrait is easily understood. She is not a merely human personage; her wings and radiant cloud denote a celestial nature. Even without the allusion to queen Elizabeth, she may be said to be of royal rank; since the exercise of mercy implies power, and in most countries has been the reserved attribute of sovereignty. The sword, rusted yet capable of being drawn, and the lion, curbed but not entirely tamed, mark the genuine character and limits of this virtue.

Collins has given a very different, yet an appropriate and exquisitely beautiful delineation of the same personage, in an ode addressed to her:

O thou who sitt'st a smiling bride  
By Valour's arm'd and awful side,  
Gentlest of sky-born forms, and best adored;  
Who oft, with songs divine to hear,  
Win'st from his fatal grasp the spear,  
And hid'st in wreaths of flow'rs his bloodless sword!  
Thou who amidst the deathful field,  
By godlike chiefs alone beheld,

Oft

Oft with thy bosom bare art found,  
Pleading for him the youth who sinks to ground !

This enchanting figure, though termed "sky-born," is not distinguished by any adjuncts from a mere mortal fair ; indeed no emblem or supernatural attribute was necessary to render Mercy sufficiently impressive under the form of a beautiful female. Another stroke of nature in the ode is truly picturesque :

.....and look'd his rage away.

That Mercy should be so closely allied to Valour as to deserve the title of his mythological bride, is certainly a pleasing idea ; and if the proper meaning of valour be courage united to generosity and elevation of mind, it is a true one. Mr. Montgomery, in his animating "Ode to the Volunteers," has adopted the imagery of Collins, and used it with fine effect. He paints the invaders broken and put to the rout, and then exclaims,

Spirit of Vengeance ! rest :

Sweet MERCY cries " Forbear ! "

She clasps the vanquish'd to her breast :

Thou wilt not pierce them there ?

CHARITY, under the title of *Charissa*, is thus personified by Spenser :

She

She was a woman in her freshest age,  
 Of wondrous beauty and of bounty rare,  
 With goodly grace and comely personage,  
 That was on earth not easy to compare ;  
 Full of great love ; but Cupid's wanton snare  
 As hell she hated, chaste in work and will :  
 Her neck and breasts were ever open bare,  
 That ay thereof her babes might suck their fill ;  
 The rest was all in yellow robes arrayed still.

A multitude of babes about her hung,  
 Playing their sports, that joyed her to behold,  
 Whom still she fed whiles they were weak and young,  
 But thrust them forth still as they waxed old ;  
 And on her head she wore a tire of gold,  
 Adorn'd with gems and owches wondrous fair,  
 Whose passing price uneath was to be told ;  
 And by her side there sat a gentle pair  
 Of turtle doves ; she sitting in an ivory chair.

*F. Q. i. 10.*

This is altogether a natural figure ; yet the circumstance of her giving the breast to a numerous swarm of children, by which Charity is commonly marked in personification, is rather to be regarded as symbolical, denoting the act of sustaining the necessitous with nourishment drawn from the very vitals of the giver. The richness of her ornaments, and her yellow robes, indicate the proper alliance of wealth with that charity which consists in bounty.

CHEER-

CHEERFULNESS, the most friendly to the mind of all its affections, has excited few efforts of the imagination among the poets, a race seldom much under its influence. Spenser has merely sketched the countenance of a cheerful person, as its representative.

And her against sweet Cheerfulness was placed,  
Whose eyes, like twinkling stars in evening clear,  
Were deckt with smiles that all sad humours chased,  
And darted forth delights, the which her goodly graced.

F. Q. iv. 10.

Collins, in his "Music of the Passions," delineates her as a huntress, obviously alluding to the effects of exercise and rural sports in promoting a cheerful disposition.

But, O, how alter'd was its sprightlier tone,  
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,  
Her bow across her shoulder slung,  
Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,  
Blew an inspiring air that dale and thicket rung !

It may here be observed that the features of Health are blended with those of Cheerfulness; and indeed the numerous odes and hymns to that Being almost uniformly paint her as a woodland nymph, or one in the train of the Goddess of the chase.

The *pensive* "Hymn to Cheerfulness," by  
Akenside,

Akenside, exhibits no other picture of the Power he invokes than that of a triumphant fair, "sweet of language and mild of mien." He bestows, indeed, many lines on her genealogy, in which he makes her the daughter of Love by Health; but a genealogy is more easily invented than a portrait.

Collins naturally makes Joy the next performer to Cheerfulness in his "Music of the Passions." He is decorated with a "viny crown," intimating his connexion with Bacchus. His favourite instrument is the viol, on which he plays a lively air, while Love and Mirth "dance a gay fantastic round" to the notes. He in the meantime

Shakes thousand odours from his dewy wings.

The whole scene is truly picturesque, though little distinctness of portraiture is bestowed on the leading figure.

The representation of VIRTUE and PLEASURE in the celebrated allegory of the "Choice of Hercules" may be referred to this class of personifications; for although they are, of themselves, merely natural figures, yet the signatures of their respective characters may be called the emblems of the abstract qualities they are intended to represent; since those qualities rather dwell



dwelt in the mind than necessarily display themselves by corporeal tokens. The description in the original Greek is simple. Of the two females who appeared to Hercules, "One (we are told) had an erect port, an open countenance, a slender shape, modest looks, and a chaste reserved demeanour. The other was full-fed and soft, with a colour more red and white than natural, bold assured looks, and a transparent garment; and, as she walked, often surveyed herself, and glanced at her shadow." The portraiture is more adorned and finished in a poem under the same title in Dodsley's Collection.

The First in native dignity surpast ;  
 Artless and unadorn'd she pleased the more :  
 Health o'er her looks a genuine lustre cast ;  
 A vest more white than new-fallen snow she wore ;  
 August she trod, yet modest was her air ;  
 Serene her eye, yet darting heavenly fire ;  
 Still she drew near, and nearer still more fair,  
 More mild appear'd : yet such as might inspire  
 Pleasure corrected with an awful fear ;  
 Majestically sweet and amiably severe.

The Other dame seem'd e'en of fairer hue ;  
 But bold her mien, unguarded roved her eye ;  
 And her flush'd cheeks confess'd at nearer view  
 The borrow'd blushes of an artful dye.

All

All soft and delicate, with airy swim  
 Lightly she danced along ; her robe betray'd  
 Through the clear texture every tender limb,  
 Heightening the charms it only seem'd to shade ;  
 And as it flow'd adown so loose and thin,  
 Her stature show'd more tall ; more snowy white her skin.

It is a fault in this paraphrase, that Virtue is made too externally attractive, contrary to the spirit of the fable, which means to inculcate the necessity of sacrificing all the delights of sense in order to acquire moral excellence. The word "pleasure" is particularly injudicious in a description of the antagonist of Pleasure personified. Silius Italicus, who has applied the same fiction to his hero Scipio Africanus, has been so far from falling into this error, that he has rather enhanced the severity of appearance by which Virtue is distinguished. After an alluring description of Pleasure, he says,

*Alterius dispar habitus ; frons hirta, nec unquam  
 Compositâ mutata comâ ; stans vultus, et ore  
 Incessuque viro propior, lætique pudoris ;  
 Celsa humeros, niveæ fulgebat stamine pallæ.*

L. xv. 28.

Unlike was Virtue's form... a shaggy front  
 Ne'er smooth'd by order'd hair ; a look sedate ;  
 A manlike gait and mien ; a modest air ;  
 And stature tall, with snowy garment graced,

The ACRASIA, or INTEMPERANCE, of the Faery  
 Queen

Queen is no more than a seducing and voluptuous female, copied (with great poetical beauty indeed) from the Alcina of Ariosto and the Armida of Tasso. One of her harbingers, *Excess*, is personified more in the emblematical manner, as a comely but indecorous dame, who squeezes the juice of grapes into a golden cup, which she offers to all passengers. (*F. Q.* ii. 12.)

The highly wrought figure of *SENSIBILITY*, in Mr. Hayley's "*Triumphs of Temper*," may be adduced as a happy example of mixed personification :

Of that enchanting age her figure seems,  
 When smiling nature with the vital beams  
 Of vivid youth, and pleasure's purple flame,  
 Gilds her accomplish'd work, the female frame,  
 With rich luxuriance tender, sweetly wild,  
 And just between the woman and the child.  
 Her fair left arm around a vase she flings,  
 From which the tender plant *Mimosa* springs :  
 Towards its leaves, o'er which she fondly bends,  
 The youthful fair her vacant hand extends  
 With gentle motion, anxious to survey  
 How far the feeling fibres own her sway :  
 The leaves, as conscious of their queen's command,  
 Successive fall at her approaching hand ;  
 While her soft breast with pity seems to pant,  
 And shrinks at every shrinking of the plant.

*Triumphs of Temper.*

Of

Of this engaging figure, both the natural and emblematical features are well conceived; but from the principal circumstance of *action* I shall take occasion to make a few remarks, which will also be applicable to several of the preceding and some of the subsequent quotations.

The use of symbolical accompaniments to identify various personified figures has been sufficiently illustrated by examples; but it may still be made a question how these adjuncts are to be employed. Are they to be rendered mere quiescent signatures, annexed to the figure as a part of his costume, like a general's truncheon or a lord treasurer's wand; or are they to be employed by him as instruments, and in some manner or other to constitute his action? Numerous authorities for both these methods may be produced; and each may be preferable according to the nature of the symbol, and the character and employment of the fictitious being. The quiescent mark of distinction seems to be most common in the designs of the ancients, both in poetry and painting. The more varied and lively invention of the moderns has generally connected the symbol with the person by some kind of action; and this must be  
 confessed

confessed to improve the spirit and expression when judiciously managed. The danger is that such action should produce an incongruity, and interfere with the aim of the allegory.

To apply this consideration to the passage just quoted——If the personified figure of Sensibility were merely to pass before the eye in a sort of pageant, as the characters do in Spenser's "Masque of Cupid," she might be allowed to employ all her attention on her sensitive plant, as denoting her close connexion with the emblem; but as in Mr. Hayley's elegant fiction she is made a queen of numerous subjects, in whose fate she is deeply interested, and to whom she is

..... quick to pay

The tender duties of imperial sway;

I cannot but think it derogatory from her character and dignity to represent her as engaged in trifling assiduities about a vegetable.

The personifications of the SEASONS OF THE YEAR, which are so common both in painting and poetry, are of the mixed kind. These are generally represented as human forms impressed with the character of that portion of the year which they indicate, with some added symbols relative to rural circumstance belonging to it.

Thus,

Thus, Spring is a female in the first bloom of youth bearing a wreath of flowers ; Summer, a mature beauty lightly drest, with a rake in her hand ; Autumn, a man of middle age with a sickle and a cornucopia ; and Winter, a decrepit old man hovering over the fire. Not only the Seasons but every single Month are pictured by Spenser in one of his cantos “ Of Mutability ;” and the Months are accompanied by their several signs in the Zodiac, the figures of which are sometimes ill-suited to the other particulars of the descriptions. Thus “ Jolly June” riding on a crab, and “ Merry October” on a scorpion, appear very strangely mounted. I shall not lengthen this paper by quoting any of these obvious and trivial conceptions, but shall present one draught by the hand of a master, which may serve to display the power of real genius to give novelty to subjects which had become trite and uninteresting from repeated imitation. It is Cowper’s personification of Winter.

Oh Winter ! ruler of th’ inverted year,  
 Thy scatter’d hair with sleet like ashes fill’d,  
 Thy breath congeal’d upon thy lips, thy cheeks  
 Fringed with a beard made white with other snows  
 Than those of age ; thy forehead wrapt in clouds ;  
 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne

A sliding

A sliding car indebted to no wheels,  
 But urged by storms along its slippery way ;  
 I love thee all unlovely as thou seem'st,  
 And dreadful as thou art.

*Task, b. iv.*

Of the *picturesque* of allegorical portraiture I am acquainted with scarcely any example equal to this, which presents a figure not less striking to the imagination than satisfactory to the judgement. In particular, the thought of placing him in a sledge driven by storms over the frozen snow, could only have occurred to one habituated to decorate fiction with the happiest circumstances supplied by reality—which is indeed the essence of poetical invention.

I cannot forbear adding a few lines of another personification of Winter by the same great poet, although it adds little to the portrait of this Being ; but his habitation and ministry are sketched in them with almost unrivalled sublimity. They are part of an address to the Greenlanders.

But Winter, arm'd with terrors here unknown,  
 Sits absolute on his unshaken throne,  
 Piles up his stores amidst the frozen waste,  
 And bids the mountains he has built stand fast ;  
 Beckons the legions of his storms away  
 From happier scenes to make your land a prey ;

Proclaims

Proclaims the soil a conquest he has won,  
And scorns to share it with the distant sun.

*Hope.*

It may, however, be remarked that the thought in the last couplet but one was probably suggested by Thomson :

And see where surly Winter passes off  
Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts.

*Spring ;*

and also, that both have a precursor in a short but spirited personification of Winter as making his residence in the Alps, by Silius Italicus.

Sola jugis habitat diris, sedesque tuetur  
Perpetuas deformis Hyems : illa undique nubes  
Huc atras agit, et mixtos cum grandine nimbos.

L. iii. 488.

Sole dweller of these crags, foul Winter here  
Has placed her fix'd abode, to this dire spot  
From every quarter drives the blackening clouds,  
And tempests fraught with hail.

NIGHT has frequently been personified by poets ancient and modern, but generally with symbols of obvious invention, such as a black veil powdered with stars, a torch, and a moon. But Spenser has exercised his fertile imagination in a picture of her formed on a much more striking and fanciful conception. Duessa, the representative of Falsehood, in her



her affliction for the discomfiture of Sansloy and Sansjoy, resorts to the eastern coast of heaven,

Where griesly Night, with visage deadly sad,  
That Phœbus' cheerful face durst never view,  
And in a foul black pitchy mantle clad,  
She finds forth coming from her darksome mew,  
Where she all day did hide her hated hue;  
Before the door her iron chariot stood,  
Already harnessed for journey new,  
And coal-black steeds yborn of hellish brood,  
That on their rusty bits did champ as they were wood.  
*F. Q. i. 5.*

After some conversation, she agrees to accompany the witch Duessa; and her progress is thus described :

Then to her iron waggon she betakes,  
And with her bears the foul well-favour'd witch;  
Thro' mirksome air her ready way she makes;  
Her twofold team (of which two black as pitch,  
And two were brown, yet each to each unlich)  
Did softly swim away, ne ever stamp,  
Unless she chanc'd their stubborn mouths to twitch;  
Then foaming tar their bridles they would champ,  
And trampling the fine element would fiercely ramp.

She arrives at the place where Sansjoy lies in a deadly trance, and there descends ;

And all the while she stood upon the ground,  
The wakeful dogs did never cease to bay,

As giving warning of th' unwonted sound  
 With which her iron wheels did them affray,  
 And her dark griesly look them much dismay.  
 The messenger of death, the ghastly owl,  
 With dreary shrieks did also her bewray ;  
 And hungry wolves continually did howl  
 At her abhorred face, so filthy and so foul.

They afterwards enter the regions of Pluto,  
 where all the brood,

Of fiends infernal flock'd on every side  
 To gaze on earthly wight, that with the Night durst ride.

There are few passages in Spenser which more display the force of his imagination, especially in the gloomy and terrific, than this fiction which is framed on the mixed plan, some of the ideas being natural and some emblematical.

As a contrast to this scenery of horror, I shall again resort to Cowper, who has personified EVENING in a style of almost unparalleled elegance and beauty.

Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,  
 With matron step slow-moving, while the Night  
 Treads on thy sweeping train ; one hand employ'd  
 In letting fall the curtain of repose  
 On bird and beast, the other charged for man  
 With sweet oblivion of the cares of day ;  
 Not sumptuously adorn'd nor needing aid,  
 Like homely-featur'd Night, of clust'ring gems ;

A star

A star or two just twinkling on thy brow  
 Suffices thee ; save that the moon is thine  
 No less than hers ; not worn indeed on high  
 With ostentatious pageantry, but set  
 With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,  
 Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.

*Task, b. iv.*

The only defect that I can discern in this sweet picture is, that while one of the hands of Evening is employed in an office that presents a sensible image, the occupation of the other is only addressed to the intellect, which renders the personification so far incomplete. The enlarged but pale moon set in the purple zone of Evening is an idea that cannot be surpassed in picturesque propriety. It may, however, be observed, that this poet has fallen into an inadvertency in placing Evening and Night in the *western* quarter of the heavens, rather than, with Spenser, in the *eastern* ; the latter being that in which darkness first appears, and the full moon rises.

### III.

I now proceed to the third class of personifications, those in which the created figure may be regarded as purely emblematical. This must

be the case, where, if the subject be a quality, it is one which exhibits itself rather in its effects on others than on the possessor of it: if it be a metaphysical being, it has no reference to any one corporeal form or mode of expression; and though it must take some visible shape in order to become a person, this is its vehicle, not its essence. There may, indeed, be an analogy in certain forms to the nature of the personified idea, which gives them a preference to others, and is generally recognised: thus Time and Death, if presented in a bodily form to the imagination, will almost universally associate themselves with age and deformity; and Love and Hope, with youth and beauty: yet these circumstances are not the characteristical parts of the portrait, and would not of themselves denote the meaning of the fiction, the explanation of which must entirely depend upon symbolical additions.

I shall begin with the representations of a Being much celebrated by modern poets, who, however, seem to have formed a conception of him somewhat different from that of their predecessors. This is FANCY, who by the earliest English writers was considered rather as the genius of caprice, levity, and mutability, than,

as now, under the character of poetical inspiration and invention. The former is the idea evidently entertained by Spenser in his beautiful picture of Fancy, as he leads the train in the "Masque of Cupid."

The first was Fancy, like a lovely boy,  
Of rare aspect, and beauty without peer.

.....

His garment neither was of silk nor say,  
But painted plumes in goodly order dight,  
Like as the sunburnt Indians do array  
Their tawny bodies in their proudest plight ;  
As those same plumes, so seem'd he vain and light.  
That by his gait might easily appear,  
For still he fared as dancing in delight,  
And in his hand a windy fan did bear,

That in the idle air he moved still here and there.

*F. Q.* iii. 12.

His feathered dress, his fan, and dancing gait are all emblematical of a light volatile nature. In the subsequent stanza he is made the parent of Desire, and common language still inputs to fancy that liking which has no foundation in sober reason.

A representation of this Being, very different in figure, but formed upon a similar conception of character, is given by Addison in his Vision of the Mountain of Human Miseries.

There

There was a certain Lady of a thin airy shape, who was very active in this solemnity. She carried a magnifying glass in one of her hands, and was clothed in a loose flowing robe, embroidered with several figures of fiends and spectres, that discovered themselves in a thousand chimerical shapes, as her garment hovered in the wind. There was something wild and distracted in her looks. Her name was Fancy.

*Spect. No. 558.*

The employment of this phantom was to aggravate every one's misfortunes or deformities in his own eyes, and to inspire a restless and capricious inclination for change. It is the same idea of Fancy, as prompting a trivial and irrational estimation of things, that is the suggestion of the monitory song in the "Merchant of Venice," where Bassanio is to make his choice of the mystic caskets.

Tell me where is Fancy bred,  
In the heart or in the head ?  
How begot, how nourished ?  
It is engender'd in the eyes,  
With gazing fed, and Fancy dies  
In the cradle where it lies.

Of the more dignified pictures of Fancy, I have met with none so striking and appropriate (according to the later idea of this faculty) as that of Warton in his admired Ode addressed to her :

O nymph

O Nymph with loosely flowing hair,  
 With buskin'd leg and bosom bare,  
 Thy waist with myrtle girdle bound,  
 Thy brows with Indian feathers crown'd,  
 Waving in thy snowy hand  
 An all-commanding magic wand,  
 Of power to bid fresh garlands blow  
 'Mid cheerless Lapland's barren snow,  
 Whose rapid wings thy flight convey  
 Through air, and over earth and sea,  
 While the vast various landscape lies  
 Conspicuous to thy piercing eyes ;  
 O lover of the desert, hail !

This is a portrait equally beautiful and characteristic. The elegant and simple costume of the nymph, and the high powers ascribed to her "magic wand," the type of invention, correspond with that taste for the charms of Nature, and that glow of the imagination, which distinguish a poetical genius. Accordingly the poet has not scrupled to confer on Fancy the title of "Parent of the Muses," and "Queen of Numbers ;" and he invokes her as the sole inspirer of genuine song. That this is a deviation from the original meaning of the term, the preceding quotations will prove ; but the transition was easy, and the innovation is sanctioned by great authorities.

Another "Ode to Fancy," by Merrick,  
 (Dodsley's

(Dodsley's Coll. vol. iv.) is framed upon the same general notion of the character, though with a larger admixture of the wild and fantastic. She is made the daughter of Melancholy by Hermes; and is said at times to resemble each parent. The objects which she presents to the mind are chiefly of the preternatural class; such as spectres, fairies, and the like shadowy beings. Thus the writer establishes a distinction between the suggestions of fancy and the ordinary motions of a warm imagination; which, perhaps, is a more accurate though less comprehensive conception of this faculty, than that in Warton's Ode.

Gray gives a picture of Fancy that appears quite original:

Hark ! his hands the lyre explore !  
 Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er  
 Scatters from her pictured urn  
 Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.

*Prog. of Poesy.*

In this piece of imagery there is something bold and striking, but it fails in point of consistency. Fancy personified may hold an urn; or Fancy as a faculty of the mind may suggest words and thoughts; but she cannot pour them out of an urn, in which they could not have  
 been



been contained. The real and metaphorical are here confounded in a manner that could scarcely have been expected from so cultivated a writer.

Love, the *Cupid* of the poets, is always an emblematical personage; for I know not of any example in which this passion is personified by the representation of one impressed with its influence. Nor, indeed, except in the fable of *Psyche*, is he made the object of desire. He is rather the type of the passion, abstractedly considered in its cause and operation. His usual figure, and the interpretation of it, cannot be better exemplified than by a quotation from *Propertius*.

Quicumque ille fuit, puerum qui pinxit Amorem,

Nonne putas miras hunc habuisse manus?

Is primum vidit sine sensu vivere amantes,

Et levibus curis magna perire bona.

Idem non frustra ventosas addidit alas,

Fecit et humano corde volare Deum.

Scilicet alterna quoniam jactamur in unda,

Nostraque non ullis permanet aura locis.

Et merito hamatis manus est armata sagittis,

Et pharetra ex humero Gnosia utroque jacet;

Ante ferit quoniam, tuti quam cernimus hostem,

Nec quisquam ex illo vulnere sanus abit.

In me tela manent, manet et puerilis imago;

Sed certe pennas perdidit ille suas.

*Eleg. ii. 12.*

How

How rare the skill his hand possest  
 That Love in childish figure drest !  
 He first perceived how lovers wear  
 Their wasted time in trifling care ;  
 The god with airy wings he drew,  
 And with a human heart he flew,  
 How justly too ! for we, alas !  
 Our lives in ceaseless tempests pass ;  
 Tost by alternate gusts we sail,  
 Nor e'er enjoy a constant gale.  
 His hand a barbed shaft extends ;  
 A quiver from his back depends ;  
 Nor vainly——since he strikes the blow  
 Ere, heedless, we discern a foe,  
 Nor ever may the wretch depart  
 Uninjured by his cruel dart.  
 I own his form, I feel his stings,  
 But sure the child has lost his wings.

In addition to this imagery, he is sometimes described as bearing a torch ; and his arrows are said to be burning. Fire and Flame have in all ages been metaphors for the amorous passion ; and much of the wit of the poets of love has been expended on comparing the real with the figurative effects of those agents. Cowley carries the phlogistic notion so far, as to say that the name of his mistress carved on the bark conveyed fire enough to burn up the whole tree. Another emblematical circumstance applied to the God of Love is his being blind,

blind, or hood-winked ; in allusion to the want of discernment so notorious in lovers. But this symbol, though of itself not unappropriate, is strangely inconsistent with his allegorical character of an archer ; and so skilful an one, that Apollo himself acknowledges him to be the better marksman.

Certa quidem nostra est ; nostrâ tamen una sagitta  
Certior, in vacuo quæ vulnera pectore fecit.

*Metam. i.*

My shaft is sure ; but that's a surer dart  
With which Love pierced my yet unwounded heart.

And indeed neither Propertius in the passage above quoted, nor Anacreon, Moschus, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, or any other of the poets of antiquity, as far as my inquiries extend, represents Love as blind ; and it is probable that this conception originated among the metaphysical writers of the middle ages. An epigram of Marullus, a Constantinopolitan Greek of the fifteenth century, has been pointed out to me as containing this idea, which it alludes to as already established :

Quæ sors eripuit lucem ? Immoderata Libido.  
Quis cæcum præit ? Ebrietas, Sopor, Otia, Luxus.

Natalis Comes, who wrote in the next century,

tury, giving an account of Cupid, speaks of his “*deformis oculorum cæcitas*” as attributed to him by the ancient poets ; yet in no one of the numerous passages relative to this Deity, which he quotes from the ancients, is this circumstance mentioned.

Cupid is likewise painted naked ; because, say the jocular critics, it is the property of love to strip people. I imagine, however, that this circumstance was intended to correspond with his childish form, and that it denoted artlessness and simplicity.

Among the innumerable personifications of Love by the poets of so many ages, I find scarcely any addition to the features and symbols above noted ; though in the action, and some of the external accompaniments, of this Power, some novelty has been displayed. There is a description of the *cruel and imperious Cupid* by Spenser, drawn with much force, and even with a degree of sublimity. It is in the “*Masque*” so often referred to ; where, after the poet has given a view of a long train of allegorical personages, representing different mental affections, closed by the figure of a lady, whose heart is cut out of her breast, and borne before her in triumph, he thus proceeds :

Next

Next after her, the winged god himself  
Came riding on a lion ravenous,  
Taught to obey the manage of that elf,  
That man and beast with power imperious  
Subdueth to his kingdom tyrannous :  
His blindfold eyes he bade awhile unbind,  
That his proud spoil of that same dolorous  
Fair dame he might behold in perfect kind ;  
Which seen he much rejoiced in his cruel mind.  
Of which, full proud, himself uprearing high,  
He looked round about with stern disdain,  
And did survey his goodly company,  
And marshalling the evil-order'd train ;  
With that, the darts which his right hand did strain  
Full dreadfully he shook, that all did quake,  
And clapt on high his coloured wings twain,  
That all his many it afraid did make ;  
Then blinding him again, his way he forth did take.

*F. Q. iii. 12.*

Every reader, I think, must feel how much this striking picture is injured by the circumstance of hoodwinking the God ; and how ill it corresponds with that imperial state and terrific demeanour which characterize him in the other parts of the description.

HOPE, that benignant affection, which, according to the mythologists, was the gift of heaven to compensate for the numerous ills of human life, though frequently described in its effects,  
has

has not often been represented by the poets under a material form. I recollect no portraiture of this Being in the ancients. Spenser affords two figures of Hope: One is that of a virgin clad in blue, and chiefly distinguished by the anchor on which she leans. This is the established symbol by which Hope has been designated since the introduction of christianity, its authority being a text in the New Testament. It may be interpreted as referring to that property of this affection, by which it enables the soul to resist the storms of adversity, and preserves it from the shipwreck of despair. As usually pictured, however, it is liable to objections. A great anchor is an awkward implement for a delicate female to carry about with her; nor is it at all an instrument for leaning upon like a staff. If preserved as the emblem, it ought rather to be borne as a miniature ornament, or to be embroidered on the robe.

Spenser's other portraiture of this Being is designed with more fancy and elegance.

With him (Fear) went Hope in rank, a handsome maid  
Of cheerful look and lovely to behold;  
In silken samite she was light array'd,

And

And her fair locks were woven up in gold;  
 She always smiled, and in her hand did hold  
 A holy-water sprinkle dipt in dew.

F. Q. iii. 12.

Mr. Spence instances this emblem of the *aspergoire*, or sprinkler, as one of those that are faulty for want of distinctness. It is not, indeed, very obvious, yet, I think, admits of an intelligible application; for Hope may justly be represented as shedding that divine influence on the mind, which enables it to repel the suggestions of despondence and despair, like holy water against the assaults of evil spirits.

A figure of Hope sketched by Milton in his "Comus" is extremely elegant, but scarcely discriminated from the other affections friendly to man.

..... white-handed Hope,  
 Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings.

Yet the epithet "hovering" is peculiarly expressive of the close and unremitting guardianship of this celestial attendant.

Collins in his "Passions," though he dwells with apparent delight on the music of Hope, has yet added nothing to her portrait.

Cowley has two pieces highly wrought in  
 his

his particular manner, entitled, "For and Against Hope," in which almost every couplet exhibits a new thought or figure of comparison, which is just started and then relinquished. But few of these present any figure to the imagination; they are rather witty notions addressed to the understanding.

Cowper, always original, in his poem entitled "Hope," gives an image of this Being, which is new, at least in the action, though the form is apparently the simple angelic, like Milton's.

Hope, with uplifted foot set free from earth,  
 Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,  
 On steady wings sails through th' immense abyss,  
 Plucks amaranthine joys from bow'rs of bliss,  
 And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,  
 With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.

FAITH is by Spenser called the elder sister of Hope; and is thus delineated:

..... the eldest, that Fidelia hight,  
 Like sunny beams threw from her crystal face,  
 That could have daz'd the rash beholder's sight,  
 And round about her head did shine like heaven's light.  
 She was arrayed all in lily white,  
 And in her right hand bore a cup of gold,  
 With wine and water fill'd up to the height,  
 In which a serpent did himself enfold,  
 That horror made to all that did behold;

But



But she no whit did change her constant mood ;  
 And in her other hand she fast did hold  
 A book that was both sign'd and seal'd with blood,  
 Wherein dark things were writ hard to be understood.

F. Q. i. 10.

This is Faith in the religious sense. The glory around her head, her pure white garments, and her mysterious book, are all symbols derived from religion. The golden cup of wine and water, containing a wreathed serpent, is probably intended as an emblem of the Eucharist.

Milton, who gives to the virgin in "Comus" Faith as one of her guardian attendants, characterizes her simply as *pure-eyed*.

The ancient personification of TRUTH was that of a female figure, beautiful, plainly clad, but emitting a peculiar splendour. Addison, in his ingenious allegory of "True and False Wit," adheres to this simplicity of conception. He distinguishes the Goddess of Truth chiefly by the bright light emanating from her; the effect of which was such, that the form of Falsehood gradually melted away to nothing in her presence. The same idea, expressed in the studied diction of poetry, constitutes the essence of Mason's portraiture of Truth.

So Truth proclaims,—I hear the sacred sound  
 Burst from the centre of her burning throne,  
 Where aye she sits with star-wreath'd lustre crown'd.  
*Elfrida.*

The learned B. Jonson, however, has not been contented with so limited an exertion of the fancy in delineating this Being; for in one of his *Masques* he draws a picture of Truth, which, as a specimen of a particular manner, is worth contemplating.

Upon her head she wears a crown of stars,  
 Through which her orient hair waves to her waist,  
 By which believing mortals hold her fast,  
 And in those golden cords are carried even  
 Till with her breath she blows them up to heav'n.  
 She wears a robe enchas'd with eagles' eyes,  
 To signify her sight in mysteries ;  
 Upon each shoulder sits a milk-white dove,  
 And at her feet do wily serpents move ;  
 Her spacious arms do reach from east to west,  
 And you may see her heart shine through her breast.  
 Her right hand holds a sun with burning rays ;  
 Her left a curious bunch of golden keys,  
 With which heav'n's gate she locketh and displays ;  
 A crystal mirror hanging at her breast,  
 By which men's consciences are search'd and rack'd, &c.

There are several more lines of this description ; but enough has been quoted to give an example of that injudicious accumulation of emblems

emblems by which a figure is rather overwhelmed than illustrated.

ERROR, the antagonist of Truth, is the subject of the first adventure of Spenser's Red-Cross Knight (*F. Q.* i. 1.) and is described as a hideous monster, with a great variety of allegorical circumstance, but altogether so loathsome and disgusting, that I shall refer to the original those who may wish to examine the fiction at large; and only mention a few of the leading particulars.

She is represented as a woman in the upper part, but ending in a long serpent train, knotted, and pointed with a sting. She gives suck to a great number of little ugly imps, who, when alarmed by any light admitted into the gloomy cave, which is her habitation, creep for shelter into the mouth of their dam. When the knight approaches, this foul monster rushes out of her den, but desecring his bright armour she hastens back :

For light she hated as the deadly bale.

He however intercepts her retreat, and a dreadful combat ensues, in the course of which, she suddenly wraps him round in her serpent folds :

That hand or foot to stir, he strove in vain,  
 God help the man so wrapt in Error's endless train !

By great efforts he forces her to loosen her hold; upon which she disgorges such contents of her stomach as are sufficient to turn that of the reader. Among them are "books and papers"—a mixture of the real with the allegorical, which frequently escapes this poet in the superabundance of his conceptions, and must be noted as a defect, though it will be excused by those who are zealous admirers of his unrivalled copiousness of invention. The conclusion of this fierce conflict, which long continues dubious, is the destruction of Error, with all her detestable brood, who are represented as bursting with the blood of their dying mother. This allegory is for the most part distinct and forcible, though rendered offensive to modern delicacy by the grossness of its imagery. Spenser, in framing this fiction, probably recollected the curious allegory in Ariosto (*Orl. Fur.* cant. 42) which describes Rinaldo's encounter with the fiend JEALOUSY. As this is also a specimen of complete emblematical personification, I shall give some account of it under this head, though that passion has already appeared among the mixed personifications.

As

As Rinaldo is travelling in search of Angelica, with whose attachment to Medoro he has been made acquainted, on a sudden he sees the sky darkened, and there issues from a cave a monster in a female form thus delineated :

Mill' occhi in capo avea senza palpebre ;  
 Non puo serrargli, e non credo che dorma.  
 Non men che gli occhi avea l'orecchie crebre ;  
 Avea in loco di crin serpi a gran torma.  
 Fuor delle diaboliche tenebre  
 Nel mondo uscì la spaventevol forma.  
 Un fiero e maggior serpe ha per la coda,  
 Che nel petto si gira, e che l' annoda.  
 Her thousand eyes a watch eternal keep ;  
 No lids were seen to close their orbs to sleep ;  
 As many ears her head terrific bears,  
 And hissing snakes supply the place of hairs.  
 A horrid serpent for her tail appears,  
 That o'er her breast his rolling volumes rears.

*Hoole.*

The knight, though under great perturbation at her appearance, prepares for a combat ; but after some skirmishing, in which he is much annoyed by her serpent, he turns about and sets spurs to his horse. The fiend, however, nimbly leaps up behind him ; and though he dashes into the narrowest and most intricate paths of a forest before him, he is unable to get rid of his infernal companion, who closely embraces

embraces him, and enwreaths him in her serpent folds. In this situation, than which one more horrible has scarcely been imagined, he is fortunately met by a cavalier clad in shining armour, who bears for his crest a broken yoke, and has a shield painted with red flames in a yellow field. At his saddle-bow hangs a mace; from which continually issues an inextinguishable fire that no temper or armour can resist. This beneficent stranger seeing Rinaldo in such a lamentable plight, rides up, and strikes off the monster from behind him, whom with his mace he beats back to her cave. He then overtakes Rinaldo, whom he had directed to ride forwards, and, having persuaded him to drink of a cold stream, the water of which has the quality of quenching amorous heat, he tells him his name and disappears. This name was SDEGNO; *Anger*, or *Disdain*; whose ministration in the adventure is an obvious piece of allegory.

Dr. Darwin, in the first part of his "*Botanic Garden*," introducing in the usual mode of similitude, by which he has so singularly diversified his poem, the story of the destruction of the army of Cambyes in its march through the African deserts, has augmented the horror  
of

of the scene by personifying the FIEND OF FAMINE as accompanying the progress of the devoted host. This figure, which is entirely of the emblematical class, will afford an instructive comparison with the *natural* draught of the same imaginary being, presented in the first part of this essay.

Loud o'er the camp the Fiend of Famine shrieks,  
 Calls all her brood, and champs her hundred beaks ;  
 O'er ten square leagues her pennons broad expand,  
 And twilight swims upon the shuddering sand ;  
 Perch'd on her crest the Griffin Discord clings,  
 And Giant Murder rides between her wings ;  
 Blood from each clotted hair and horny quill,  
 And showers of tears in blended streams distill ;  
 High poised in air her spiry neck she bends,  
 Rolls her keen eye, her dragon claws extends,  
 Darts from above, and tears at each fell swoop  
 With iron fangs the decimated troop.

That there is great force and sublimity of conception in this delineation will be acknowledged by every reader ; and when this creature of fancy is compared with the exact copy of a starving wretch exhibited by Ovid as the representative of Famine, the power of a poetical imagination to rise above the mere suggestions of reality will appear strikingly exemplified. It will, however, be found that novelty and grandeur  
 are

are gained at some expense of distinctness and consistency; and that it is impossible for the mind to body forth with equal clearness, the fictitious and the natural figure. The poet has indeed rather overloaded his draught with circumstances. The mingled blood and tears distilling from the plumage,—tears shed by no eyes,—the enormous bulk, and the *single* neck and *hundred* beaks, are incongruities that baffle the attempt to put the phantom into a visible form.

The allegory of Sin and Death is well known to every reader of the *Paradise Lost*, and its propriety has long exercised the judgement of critics. I shall not here consider it in relation to its place in the epic poem, but shall confine myself to a few observations on the personification of these beings.

The figure of SIN is evidently copied from the snaky females above described, or their classical prototypes, with the addition of that of Scylla in the *Metamorphoses*. The serpent sting with which she is armed denotes the power of Sin to inflict torments on others; while the hell-hounds with which she is begirt, and which continually return into the womb that bred them, and howl, and gnaw her bowels, present  
a striking



a striking emblem of those pangs of a guilty conscience under which she herself suffers. Her birth from the head of Satan when engaged in a conspiracy against Heaven's King, is a fine allusion to the mythological fable of Pallas springing from the head of Jupiter; and her incestuous commerce with her father, of which Death was the fruit, is a moral fiction conformable to the doctrine of revealed religion.

The representation of DEATH by this poet will afford an occasion for considering the various manners in which this dreaded foe of mankind has been offered to the imagination under a personal form. The common skeleton figure of Death with his dart and hour-glass is a very vulgar and inaccurate conception. Although the eye by frequent use is rendered insensible to the absurdity of a figure in strong action, destitute of all the parts which are requisite for motion, and denoting the utmost degree of decay and dissolution, yet the slightest degree of reflection must bring such an incongruity before the mind of every one who has any acquaintance with the nature of the animal body. It is, in fact, one of the grossest examples of that confounding of the characters of agent and patient which is so frequent in allegorical portraiture.

traitures. The poets, however, have been less guilty of this error in the present instance than the painters and sculptors. Though I can find but few delineations of this Being in poetry, yet those few are formed upon a different model.

Statius paints Death as an infernal monster with wings, hovering over the field of battle, and, like the Chusers of the slain in the Gothic mythology, selecting his victims.

..... Stygiisque emissa tenebris  
Mors fruitur cœlo, bellatoremque volando  
Campum operit, nigroque viros invitat hiatu,  
Nil vulgare legens ; sed quæ dignissima vitâ  
Funera præcipuos annis, animisque, cruento  
Angue notat.

*Theb.* viii. 376.

From Stygian shades let loose, Death springs to air,  
And soars above the field : his spacious throat  
Invites the prey : the prime of all the host  
In youth and valour, worthiest length of life,  
He culls, and marks them with his bloody snake.

Silius Italicus represents him in like manner as a ravenous devourer, when he visits the unfortunate city of Saguntum.

Mors graditur, vasto pandens cava guttura rictu.

Death stalks, and wide his yawning throat expands.

And Seneca the Tragedian gives him the same action, and furnishes him with numerous wings.

Mors

Mors alta avidos oris hiatus  
Pandit, et omnes explicat alas.

*Œdip. act. i.*

Fell Death his greedy jaws expands,  
And all his wings unfolds.

Milton has adopted this classical idea of his insatiate hunger; but as the conception itself is somewhat vulgar, he may be thought to have carried it to the borders of the ludicrous.

..... Death  
Grinn'd horribly a ghastly smile, to hear  
His famine should be filled, and blest his maw  
Destin'd to that good hour.

*Par. L. ii.*

In the description of this phantom, however, he has surpassed all other poets, by a kind of indistinct sublimity, which strongly impresses the imagination, perhaps the more on account of the exercise given to that faculty in filling up a draught so loosely sketched.

..... The other shape,  
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,  
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night,  
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head  
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

*Par. L. ii. 666.*

Here

Here is a striking example of the powers of poetry to excite grand and impressive images which painting cannot follow, though appealing to the sense which that art peculiarly addresses. The misty indistinctness of outline in this shadowy figure, and its questionable form and substance, which render it unfit for the determinate strokes of the pencil, do not prevent the imagination from embodying a mass of black cloud through which appear the obscure lineaments of a horrid phantom, sufficiently resembling the poet's conception to produce the effect he intended. I am aware that painting has attempted this delineation, but, according to my perceptions, with little success.

Though it be possible that Milton in this passage might have taken a hint from the following lines of Spenser, yet I think it cannot with justice be said, with Mr. Thyer, that the former was borrowed from the latter.

But after all came Life ; and lastly Death ;  
 Death with most grim and griesly visage seen,  
 Yet he is nought but parting of the breath ;  
 Ne ought to see, but like a shade to ween,  
 Unbodied, unsoul'd, unheard, unseen.

F. Q. vii. 7.

The whole of *picture* is contained in the second

cond of these lines, and it is the *metaphysical* description alone of Death, which the rest present. A critic, with more probability, has pointed out Homer's description of Hercules in the lower regions (*Odyss.* xi.) "black as night, and ever in the act to shoot," as the original of Milton's conception.

It is under the semblance of the God of War that Death appears in a noble ode (though injured by some affectation) in Mason's *Caractacus*, beginning

Hark ! heard ye not yon footstep dread  
That shook the earth with thund'ring tread ?

Perhaps, however, in this bold and martial figure, we want the peculiar features of the Power introduced on the scene.

The personified conception of TIME is in many respects similar to that of Death. He is equally a destroyer, indeed more universally so, as his destruction extends to inanimate things. His weapon is usually a scythe, in allusion to the employment of that weapon to level the flowery pride of the meadows ; but the scythe is obviously an improper bearing when he is figured as undermining or battering down towers. He is represented as old ; either  
from

from the effects of Time upon the human form, or from the long duration of past time, to which we familiarly give the name of antiquity. Some have painted him with a single forelock on a bald head; which, however, as we shall afterwards see, is the more appropriated symbol of Opportunity. He is winged, to express that swiftness of progress which is so common a complaint; and he sometimes measures his course by an hour-glass, like Death. All these emblems are found alike in the graphical and poetical representations of Time. They are, indeed, generally only alluded to as established characteristics by the poets, few of whom have attempted a complete portrait of this Being. Thus Young, in his "Night Thoughts," has made a fine use of his being winged.

Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,  
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age :  
Behold him when past by ; what then is seen,  
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds ?  
And all mankind in contradiction strong,  
Rueful, aghast, cry out on his career.

B. i.

The same poet in another passage paints with great force Time as employing his weapon of destruction.

Each

Each moment has its sickle, emulous  
 Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep  
 Strikes empires from the root.

B. i.

Parnel, in his "Allegory on Man," gives a picture of *Young Time*, which has some merit from its novelty.

As yet his winters had not shed  
 Their silver honours on his head ;  
 He just had got his pinions free  
 From his old sire Eternity.  
 A serpent girdled round he wore,  
 The tail within the mouth before :  
 A staff he carried, where on high  
 A glass was fixt to measure by :  
 His vest, for day and night, was pied ;  
 A bending sickle arm'd his side ;  
 And Spring's new months his train adorn :  
 The other seasons were unborn.

Young's *moment-sickle* was probably borrowed from this weapon of Time in his infancy, not yet a year old.

But by much the grandest image of this allegorical person, that I have met with, is presented in a Latin Ode of Dr. Jortin's, inscribed "Ad Tempus:" it thus commences :

O qui severus falce adamantina  
 Matura fato destruis, et gravi  
 Frangis ruina quicquid axe  
 Prætereas, Deus, incitato ;

Tu,

Tu, sede celsus, dum revolubilem  
 Torques laborem, dura Necessitas  
 Auriga in æternos recursus  
 Flectit equos volucremque currum :

Obscura cæco Sæcla silentio,  
 Diesque plumis versicoloribus,  
 Annique, volventesque Menses  
 Fulmineum comitantur axem.

Tecum alta Virtus laurigeram sedet  
 Decora frontem, et filia Veritas,  
 Cui vultus immortale fulgens  
 Purpureo radiatur igni.

Time seated in a lofty car, whirled along in his destructive orbit, driven by Necessity, and having Virtue and refulgent Truth, his daughter, by his side; while Ages, Years, Months, and Days accompany his chariot:—all together form a group of poetical dignity and splendour, which, perhaps, it would not be easy to parallel in the range of allegorical fiction.

Of OCCASION, or *Opportunity*, a picture is given in an epigram of Ausonius entitled “*Occasionis et Pœnitentiæ.*” It is in the form of a dialogue between the querist and the image, and possesses very little of the spirit of poetry. The following lines are translated from it with a free hand, and have much of what it wants.

The



The angelic beauty of the figure is a gratuitous gift of the translator ; but it is no improper addition, considering the beneficent nature of *Occasion*, when advantage is duly made of her offers.

Ah ! who art thou of more than mortal birth,  
Whom heaven adorns with beauty's brightest beam ;  
On wings of speed why spurn'st thou thus the earth ?

“ Known but to few, *Occasion* is my name.

No rest I find, for underneath my feet

The eternal circle rolls that speeds my way ;

Not the strong eagle wings her course so fleet,

And these my glittering pinions I display

That from the dazzling sight thine eyes may turn away.

“ In full luxuriance o'er my angel face

Float my thick tresses free and unconfin'd,

That through the veil my features few may trace ;

But not one lock adorns my head behind :

Once past, for ever gone, no mortal might

Shall bid the circling wheel return again.”

But who is she companion of thy flight ?

“ *Repentance* :—if thou grasp at me in vain,

Then must thou in thine arms her loathsome form retain.”

Her rapid motion borne along by the ever-rolling circle of time, and the want of locks on the back part of the head to afford a hold for retaining her when once past, are very intelligible symbols of the urgency of *occasion*, which, if not seized at the moment, is often for

ever lost. The picture would have been more perfect if a slight delineation had been given of the form of Repentance, which is made the allegorical companion of Occasion.

An extremely different personification of this Being is given in Spenser, where he considers Occasion as ministering to Fury, and inciting him to his outrages. He preserves indeed the emblem of locks on the forepart of a head which is bald behind; but the rest of the picture is that of age and deformity joined with malice.

And him behind a wicked hag did stalk,  
In ragged robes and filthy disarray ;  
Her other leg was lame, that she no' te walk,  
But on a staff her feeble steps did stay :  
Her locks, that loathly were, and hoary gray,  
Grew all afore, and loosely hung unroll'd ;  
But all behind was bald and worne away,  
That none thereof could ever taken hold,  
And eke her face ill-favour'd, full of wrinkles old.

*F. Q. ii. 4.*

The impotence and decrepitude of this figure, so opposite to the youth and celerity of the preceding, were probably intended to denote, that opportunity has no force of itself, and can only act in conjunction with some powerful motive, to which it affords additional incitements.

ments. Sir Guyon, the knight of Temperance, is represented as thrusting away this mischievous hag before he attempts to master the lunatic Furor; the allegorical interpretation of which is obvious.

The personification of FAME in the Eneid is well known to every classical reader, though few, perhaps, have been able to form a distinct image of the poet's conception in drawing the figure. Fame here, it must be first observed, is understood in the sense of Rumour, or what we usually call Common Fame, and not of Celebrity. She is made, like Homer's Eris, a *growing* form, small at first, but soon towering to the skies; an idea, indeed, suited to the nature of *rumour*, but scarcely compatible with the notion of a permanent being, the imaginary Genius or Goddess of Fame. Her figure is thus described:

Monstrum horrendum, ingens, cui quot sunt corpore plumæ;  
Tot vigiles oculi subter, mirabile dictu !  
Tot linguæ, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit aures.

*Æn. iv.*

As many plumes as o'er her body spread,  
Wondrous to tell ! so many watchful eyes  
Beneath are couch'd, so many tongues and mouths  
Discordant sound, so many ears are rear'd.

It is difficult to conceive of the existence of such a monster; nor is the imagination assisted by any leading features which refer it to a particular class of animated forms; so that we are at a loss whether to fancy it under a human semblance or as a strange kind of fowl. She indeed possesses most of the characters of some nocturnal bird, flying by night between heaven and earth, and perched by day on the tops of roofs and turrets; yet this image is scarcely consistent with the prior representation of her as walking on earth and hiding her head in the clouds. Upon the whole, I cannot think Virgil happy in this fiction, much as it has been admired and imitated; and if it was the product of his own invention, it will prove that the strength of his poetic talent did not lie in allegorical personification. The candid critic Heyne admits that there are apparent inconsistencies in this draught, some of which, however, he excuses by the remark that such monstrous conceptions afford an evidence of the different genius of poetry and painting, and show that what may please in the former art, may give disgust when copied by the latter. It is indeed true, that many images really sublime or beautiful in poetry, cannot successfully

fully be transferred to painting ; but the cause of this exists in the much more confined scope and range of the pencil, and especially in its inability to depict motion or progressive change. It is likewise incapable of giving adequate ideas of unbounded magnitude, and of that indefinite outline which is frequently a striking circumstance in the creations of fancy. Yet when a visible object is made the topic of description by a poet, and determinate lineaments are assigned to it, compared to those of known forms, I cannot but think that the effect of transferring these ideas to canvass is, on the whole, a proper test of their congruity. Images that will not bear this proof will as little bear the process of an accurate mind in attempting to embody them to the fancy ; and this, in fact, is the reason why extravagant conceptions in poetry do not long retain their interest, but are discarded with the other toys of puerility.

Statius in the third book of the "Thebaid" has given a slight sketch of Fame flying before the chariot of the God of War ; and urged by the whip of the charioteer, and the spear of the God himself, to spread true and false reports as she proceeds. No particular delineation of her person is attempted.

Neither

Neither has Ovid in his allegory of Fame (*Metam.* xii.) given any portraiture of the Being herself, but has displayed much fancy in the description of her palace, situated between heaven and earth, and adapted to be the receptacle of rumours of every kind, which are thence transmitted with confusion and aggravation. The companions or ministers of this deity are Credulity, Error, Vain Joy, and Panic Fear, Sedition, and Whispers of uncertain origin; and she herself receives intelligence of all that is passing in heaven, earth, and sea,

..... totumque inquit in orbem :

and carries her inquiries throughout the universe. In short, she is the Genius of a modern Newspaper.

Pope, in his "Temple of Fame," modernized from Chaucer, one of the most poetical of his compositions, has confounded the two significations of the word, the ancient with the modern. After he has, with great elevation of language and sentiment, employed Fame in the sense of celebrity, he copies the old mythological description of the Goddess with her thousand tongues, eyes, and ears; and closes his allegory in the proper House of *Rumour*, from Ovid.

LIBERTY

LIBERTY has frequently received the homage of poets, but few have exercised their imagination in a portraiture of the object of their adoration. She is generally represented as a Goddess, fair and majestic, but with few accompaniments to distinguish her from other beings of an elevated and benignant character. Formerly she bore the wand and cap, the Roman symbols of emancipation : but Thomson with propriety rejects these marks when describing her as the Guardian Deity of Britain.

..... Methought the fair majestic power  
Of Liberty appear'd. Not, as of old,  
Extended in her hand the cap and rod,  
Whose slave-enlarging touch gave double life ;  
But her bright temples bound with British oak,  
And mural honours nodded on her brow.  
Sublime of port ; loose o'er her shoulders flow'd  
Her sea-green robe with constellations gay ;  
An Island-Goddess now ; and her high care  
The queen of isles, the mistress of the main.

*Liberty, i. 25.*

This is a dignified figure, but not sufficiently discriminated as a personification ; for in the Island-Goddess we lose the peculiar features of Liberty.

Addison, who in his " Letter from Italy" found no other designation for Liberty than a

..... Goddess

..... Goddess heavenly bright,  
 Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight;

has presented a sublime but indistinct image of this personage in a Vision containing a political allegory, which forms the 161st Number of the "Tatler." He places the scene amidst the Alps; and after a description of the landscape, afforded by those wild and romantic regions, the residence of Liberty, "I beheld (says he) the Goddess sitting upon a throne. She had nothing to enclose her but the bounds of her own dominions; and nothing over her head but the heavens. Every glance of her eye cast a track of light where it fell, that revived the spring, and made all things smile about her." He afterwards, with classical propriety, marks *The Genius of a Commonwealth* by the cap and wand; alluding as well to the most famous of all republics, as to that levelling of ranks which is characteristical of democratical governments.

When Milton in "L'Allegro" gave Liberty the epithet of the "mountain nymph," he probably did not so much allude to the tendency of mountainous situations to foster political liberty (which in fact admits of many exceptions), as to the elastic air and open prospects



prospects of such regions, corresponding with the unrestrained spirit of personal and social freedom.

It is remarkable that Collins, in his "Ode to Liberty," has not given the slightest sketch of her form, though he speaks of her supposed shrine,

'Midst the green navel of our isle.

This shrine, however, is infinitely surpassed by the fancied altar reared to the same power by Cowper, who addresses her, though without any description of her person, with all the enthusiasm of a true votary.

Oh, could I worship aught beneath the skies  
That earth has seen, or fancy can devise,  
Thine altar, sacred Liberty, should stand,  
Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,  
With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair  
As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer air.

*Charity.*

The kind of reversed sacrifice that he proposes as an offering to her, of letting fly

A captive bird into the boundless sky,  
is also delightfully imagined.

Another genuine and contemporary poet, also a zealous adorer of Freedom, Burns, has given  
in

in an unfinished piece called "A Vision" a glimpse of the Power, clad in a very different bodily form from those above assigned to her, but one supremely impressive :

By heedless chance I turn'd mine eyes,  
And by the moonbeam shook to see  
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise  
Attir'd as minstrels wont to be.

Had I a statue been o' stane,  
His daring look had daunted me :  
And on his bonnet grav'd was plain  
The sacred posy ' Liberty.'

And frae his harp sic strains did flow  
Might rouse the slumb'ring dead to hear.

These lines are worthy of the bard who sung  
Bruce at Bannockburn.

One of the most singular personifications in Spenser is that of RETRIBUTIVE PUNISHMENT, or RETALIATION, under the name of *Talus*. It is in the Legend of Artegall, or of Justice (*F. Q.* v. 1.) When Astrea quitted the world, as no longer a fit habitation for her,

..... she left her groom,  
An iron man which did on her attend  
Always to execute her stedfast doom,  
And willed him with Artegall to wend,  
And do whatever thing he did intend :

His

His name was Talus, made of iron mold,  
 Immoveable, resistless, without end :  
 Who in his hand an iron flail did hold,  
 With which he thresht out falshood and did truth unfold.

This Being appears in a questionable shape,  
 sometimes like a kind of metallic automaton,  
 and sometimes as a human squire or pursuivant.  
 Nothing can be more efficacious than his ministry,

For he was swift as swallow in her flight,  
 And strong as lion in his lordly might :

and at the command of his master he instantly flies to execute his orders, without hesitation or pity, seizing criminals with his "iron paw," or beating them down with his flail. This instrument he uses in the subsequent adventure merely as a weapon, though in the lines above quoted it is made symbolical of judicial discrimination between right and wrong ; and the part he acts in the allegory is that of executive force, neither feeling nor deliberating, but performing the work of Justice with irresistible might.

But the most extraordinary personification perhaps ever attempted is that of SILENCE, by Congreve in his "Ode to Mrs. Arabella Hunt, singing."

singing." It is introduced with the two expressive lines,

Hither let nought but sacred Silence come,  
And let all saucy praise be dumb.

He proceeds,

And lo, Silence himself is here ;  
Methinks I see the midnight God appear.  
In all his downy pomp array'd,  
Behold the rev'rend shade !  
An ancient sigh he sits upon,  
Whose memory of sound is long since gone,  
And purposely annihilated for his throne :  
Beneath, two soft transparent clouds do meet,  
In which he seems to sink his softer feet.  
A melancholy thought, condens'd to air,  
Stol'n from a lover in despair,  
Like a thin mantle serves to wrap  
In fluid folds his visionary shape.  
A wreath of darkness round his head he wears,  
Where curling mists supply the place of hairs :  
While the still vapours which from poppies rise  
Bedew his hoary face, and lull his eyes.

No poet, sure, ever went further in giving

to airy Nothing

A local habitation and a name :

and were it possible to raise an image from inanity, or nonexistence, perhaps some conception might be formed of the throne of this Being, made of an annihilated sigh. The passage

sage is certainly curious, as an example how absolute nonsense may be made, by virtue of poetical figures and diction, to assume something of the appearance of sense. The unrealities in this description are so skilfully assimilated to things real, that we are led to imagine we have gained ideas, till by grasping them they shrink into nihility.

I shall here close the Gallery of Personifications ; not because it would be difficult to add to the number of pieces, but because I conceive them to be sufficiently numerous both to afford a pleasing and interesting variety of these creations of the fancy, and to elucidate that classification of them which is the basis of the present paper, and which I cannot but think an important preliminary to that accurate notion of their nature and purpose on which all just rules for their formation must be founded. It will have been seen from the remarks annexed to the particular examples, that as this species of poetical invention affords, perhaps, the highest exercise to the imagination, so it is the most liable to run into incongruities and extravagances ; which can be avoided only by that correct judgement which is the result of a clear conception of the thing intended to be produced.

Incon-

Inconsistencies in art are always the consequence of indeterminate plans, in which various ideas are admitted without previous examination of their compatibility with each other, or their concurrence in one uniform design. Hence arise such combinations as those censured by Horace in his Art of Poetry, under the similitude of a body compounded of parts of the most discordant animals. These are, indeed, “ægrî somnia”—the dreams of a distempered imagination; and no fertility of invention will compensate for the want of that propriety and perspicuity which are essential in works claiming the approbation of cultivated taste.

ON  
THE HUMOUR OF ADDISON.

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IN the constellation of men of genius which shed lustre upon English literature during the early part of the eighteenth century, the palm is given to Addison for that delicate kind of humour which, for the purpose either of correction or amusement, attaches a gentle and good-natured ridicule to delineations of manners and customs. This award of criticism seems never to have been disputed; and if we include in the competition all the attempts in this walk that have appeared from his age to the present time, the claim of Addison to superiority will probably still remain unshaken. The peculiar character, however, of his humour has not, perhaps, yet been considered with sufficient distinctness; at least, the latest eminent writer who has given an estimate of the genius of Addison, seems to me to have been strangely mistaken in this point. "His humour (says Dr. Johnson in his *Lives of the Poets*)

Poets) is so happily diffused as to give the grace of novelty to domestic scenes and daily occurrences. He never outsteps the modesty of nature, nor raises merriment or wonder by the violation of truth. His figures neither divert by distortion, nor amuse by aggravation. He copies life with so much fidelity, that he can hardly be said to invent; yet his exhibitions have an air so much original, that it is difficult to suppose them not merely the product of the imagination."

The preceding passage is one of the many instances of the haste and negligence discernible in this work of the celebrated author, who appears in composing it to have trusted almost entirely to his recollections of past reading and early impressions. What there is of positive in the description is too vague and general to afford any precise ideas; and the negative part may easily be shown to be extremely erroneous. That there is no fiction or aggravation in Addison's humorous pictures is so far from being true, that many of the most entertaining, and which most characterize his manner, are founded on nothing else.

It is a frequent practice with him to seize on some story, fabulous or historical, and;  
adopting



adopting only the leading circumstance, to found upon it a fiction of his own, of an entirely ludicrous kind; and this is the species of humour in which he is perhaps the most original and unrivalled. Of this artifice the following examples may be pointed out.

The fanciful notion of "words congealed in northern air" is worked up by him into a very pleasant story (*Tatler*, No. 254.) which he pretends to have taken from a manuscript of the noted traveller Sir John Mandeville—in which ascription, indeed, he is not very happy, as Sir John was not the commander of a ship, and his travels did not lie towards the north. The narrative, however, is full of entertainment, from the well-invented incidents which, granting the hypothesis, appear perfectly natural, and are related with all the simplicity of truth. The gradual loss of voice on the increase of cold, the thawing of the frozen sounds with the comic circumstances produced by it, and the strokes of national character displayed in the different effects of this phenomenon, are admirable specimens of that easy play of the imagination which to fertility of humorous fiction adds the unconstrained air of reality.

The Taliacotian practice of engrafting noses,

wittily touched upon by Butler in a simile, has supplied Addison with the subject of a paper in the *Tatler* (No. 260.) in which he has given full scope to his comic invention, but certainly not without a manifest turn to ludicrous exaggeration. The foundation of the story was, indeed, something like fact; but the fiction of a sympathy between the inserted nose and the part whence it was taken, copied by Addison from *Hudibras*, was a happy addition, which he has employed to the fabrication of various laughable circumstances.

The supposed register of those who took the lover's leap (*Spectator*, No. 233.) is another example of his facility of sportive invention, and is not less distinguished for its classical propriety than for its elegant humour. The varied characters of the leapers, male and female, and the comic and satiric touches of incident connected with them, are conceived in his happiest manner. The bill of mortality of lovers (*Spect.* No. 377.) is a kind of continuation of this idea, and is equally excellent.

Will. Honeycomb's dream of women carrying out their respective loads from a besieged town, (*Spect.* No. 499.) a contrast to the true  
story

story of the good wives of Hennesberg, is a further instance of ludicrous fiction suggested by a historical narration.

A real article in a Dutch gazette respecting a French academy for politics, has given occasion, in the 305th number of the *Spectator*, to a very humorous and sarcastic account of the professors of this institution, "according to his private letters," which is a masterpiece of political satire. The purpose of this paper is more serious than that of any of those above mentioned, but the manner is equally playful.

Now, of these effusions of humour, to which several might be added, it cannot justly be said that they please by their adherence to truth, or even to probability; on the contrary, they derive their merit from a kind of agreeable extravagance, always perceptible enough to the reader, but made to wear an appearance of reality, by the natural cast of the language, and the mixture of incidents taken from common life. Many others of his papers afford fancy-pieces of the caricature and grotesque kind. Such are, the *Virtuoso's Will*, and most of the proceedings of the *Court of Honour*, in the *Tatler*; the *Citizen's* and the *fine Lady's Journal*, the *Everlasting* and the *Widow's Club*,

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the Opera Lions, and the Lady's Library, all in the Spectator; and the Rebel Officer's Journal, and the Pretender's Annals, in the Freeholder. In others he has sported in scenes of pure invention; as in his transmigrations of a monkey, his dissection of a beau's head and a coquet's heart, his mountain of human miseries, and his delightful antediluvian tale of Shalum and Hilpa.

Thus it would appear that Addison rejected no promising source of the ludicrous, whether suggested by reading, observation, or pure imagination. It may, however, be admitted that his humour is most effectual for that purpose of correcting the follies and foibles of mankind which he seems to have had much at heart, when it most nearly coincides with the description which Dr. Johnson has given as its universal character; for, the more a likeness to reality is recognised in a picture, the more sensible we are rendered of the defects and irregularities of the prototype. This natural mode of painting is particularly conspicuous in his political Upholsterer, his Sir Roger de Coverly, and his Country Squire in the Freeholder. In his delineation of these personages he has almost entirely avoided caricature, and has produced

duced his effect by so many nice touches of reality, that we seem as thoroughly acquainted with them as if they were within our daily observation. His object with regard to the Upholsterer and the Country Squire was manifestly political satire; and that the same purpose was fundamental in Sir Roger, though combined with much pleasing morality, will, I think, be evident on an attentive examination of the portraiture. It is, however, to be premised, that the Sir Roger of Addison, and not of Steel, is the character here intended; for these, in fact, are two very different persons, as a few observations will sufficiently prove.

In the account of the members of the Spectator's club, written apparently by Steel (*Spect.* No. 2.) Sir Roger is described as a man of singularities, but such as originate from a peculiar vein of good sense; and though fond of retirement, and careless of his appearance, since he was crossed in love, it is said that in his youth he had been a fine gentleman, who supped with Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, had fought a duel, and kicked a bully in a coffee-house. But this supposed town education is utterly inconsistent with the ignorance of the common forms of life, the rusticity and credulity,

credulity, attributed to him in the subsequent displays of his character. Steel himself has fallen into some of these deviations from his original draught; but Addison seems to have entirely disregarded it; and to have drawn from a conception of his own, to which he has faithfully adhered. *His* Sir Roger, though with some of the marks of individuality which constitute what is called an humourist, is essentially a benevolent, cheerful, hearty country gentleman, of slender abilities and confined education, warmly attached to church and king, and imbued with all the political opinions of the country or tory party. Though rendered an object of affection from the goodness of his heart and the hilarity of his temper, he exhibits weaknesses and prejudices which scarcely leave place for esteem; nor do we meet with any of that whimsical complication of sense and folly which Steel's papers attempt to display, and which he accounts for on the supposition of a mental infirmity left by his amorous disappointment. He was therefore a very suitable vehicle for that half-concealed and good-humoured satire of his party which was certainly in Addison's view, and which cannot be mistaken by one who attends to the following particulars

particulars among the highly amusing traits by which the good knight is characterized.

His behaviour at church may pass as the oddity of an humourist, though it also plainly denotes the rustication of a life passed among dependent peasants; but his half-belief of witchcraft in the case of Moll White is undoubtedly meant as a stroke of satire upon rural ignorance and superstition. Sir Roger gravely admonishes the old woman to have no communication with the devil, and not to hurt her neighbours' cattle; and it is remarked that "he would frequently have bound her over to the county sessions, had not his chaplain with much ado persuaded him to the contrary." At the assizes he gets up and makes a speech, but "so little to the purpose," says the Spectator, "that he will not trouble his readers with an account of it." In the adventure with the gipsies, the knight suffers them to tell him his fortune, and appears half inclined to put faith in their predictions. His notion that the Act of Uniformity had already begun to take effect, because a rigid dissenter who had dined at his house on Christmas day had been observed to eat heartily of plum-porridge, is a palpable raillery upon the narrow conceptions of the high party. The description

tion of Sir Roger's behaviour at the representation of the "Distressed Mother" is admirably humorous; but the figure the knight makes in it is not at all more respectable than that of Partridge in *Tom Jones* on a similar occasion. He there, too, shows his party, by remarking that the last play he saw was the "Committee," and that he should not have gone to that, had he not been told before-hand that it was a good Church-of-England comedy. But it is in the visit to the tombs in Westminster Abbey that Addison has most indulged himself in ridiculing the good man's simplicity. Sir Roger, it seems, was prepared for this spectacle by a course of study of Baker's Chronicle in the summer, for the purpose of enabling him to maintain his ground in political debate with Sir Andrew Freeport. He accordingly deals out his historical knowledge very liberally as he passes among the heroes of this profound writer. The show-man, however, informs him of many circumstances not recorded by Baker; and this profusion of anecdote makes him appear so extraordinary a person to Sir Roger, that he not only kindly shakes him by the hand at parting, but invites him to his lodgings in Norfolk-street, in order "to talk over these matters



matters with him more at leisure." This trait is pleasantly ludicrous, but somewhat *outré*, as applied to a person at all removed from the lowest vulgar.

If the picture of Sir Roger be compared with that of the country gentleman in the Freeholder, it will be found that they differ chiefly in the milder temper and more humanized character of the knight, and scarcely at all in point of information and understanding. Both have the same national and party prejudices, and they exhibit an equal inferiority to the more cultured inhabitant of the town. As the Freeholder was an avowed political paper, Addison did not hesitate to appear openly in it as the satirist of the country party; but it required all his skill to effect a similar purpose in the Spectator without appearing to violate the impartiality professed in that work, or offending some of his readers. He has been so happy in his attempt, by allying benignity with weakness, and amusing incident with strokes of sarcasm, that his papers in which Sir Roger appears have always been among the most popular of the collection, and have doubtless greatly contributed towards stamping upon the public mind that abstract idea of a country gentleman, which  
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has been the ground of the contempt (whether well or ill founded) usually attached to the character. Fielding, in his *Squire Western*, has pursued the same satirical intention, but in a manner which, compared with that of Addison, exhibits all the difference between broad and delicate humour. In Fielding's portraiture the features are so coarse and unamiable, that when we do not laugh, we are disgusted. Provincial dialect, gross and indelicate phraseology, vulgar habits, and headstrong passions, are the colours which he employs; and the result is the picture of a savage, rather than of a member of civilized society. On the other hand, Addison, by nice touches of rusticity, prejudice, and the ignorance belonging to sequestered life, has drawn with equal distinctness two figures in the same class of society, and with the same ultimate purpose, one of whom he has made highly amiable, and the other at least not displeasing. Both those writers were masters in their several styles; but while Fielding has had many predecessors and followers in his manner, where shall we find a parallel to that of Addison!

ON  
THE COMPARATIVE VALUE OF  
DIFFERENT PRODUCTIONS IN  
THE FINE ARTS.

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MR. GIBBON, in the 24th chapter of his History, relating the circumstances of the emperor Julian's expedition into Persia, describes with his usual force of language the total demolition of "three stately palaces, laboriously enriched with every production that could gratify the luxury and pride of an eastern monarch." He then makes the unexpected reflection, that these wanton ravages need not excite any vehement emotions of pity or resentment. "A single naked statue (says he) finished by the hand of a Grecian artist, is of more genuine value than all these rude and costly monuments of barbaric labour."

It must be presumed that when he arms us against the feelings of compassion and resentment on account of this destruction, he speaks in the character of a connoisseur, not of a moralist; for otherwise, the wanton demolition  
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even of a girl's baby-house might afford just occasion for both these emotions. I shall therefore consider his remark simply as an opinion suggested by his perceptions relative to works of art, and shall make it the ground of some general discussion on the subject.

This passage came before me just after I had been beholding with great delight and admiration Mr. Daniell's exquisite Views of the Remains of ancient Edifices in Hindostan; and it naturally led me to examine with some attention the foundation of an assertion pronounced in so decisive a manner, and in which I was at that time little disposed to acquiesce. Pursuing in my own mind a comparison between the different productions of the fine arts, it appeared to me that they might be properly considered, in respect to their objects, under the two heads of *imitation* and *creation*; and that the true principle by which the relative value of each class should be estimated, was to examine the nature of the ideas they are severally calculated to call forth in the mind of the observer.

Simple imitation, if skilfully executed, excites, in the first place, a sense of admiration of the talents of the artist; which is, doubtless,

less, an agreeable emotion, inasmuch as it results from a display of those capacities in man which are always contemplated with pleasure. But the effect of an imitation must finally depend upon the quality of the thing imitated; and if that be either void of intrinsic beauty or grandeur, or such as is rendered indifferent to us by its frequency, the mind will not long be gratified in dwelling upon the copy. It will feel that no accession is made to its stock of ideas beyond that of a difficulty overcome by the power of art; and though an artist in the same branch may derive a reflected interest from considering how the effect has been produced, and associating his own improvement with an attentive study of the work; yet a common observer will soon come to regard it with no other feelings than the original object would have inspired. The Dutch and Flemish schools of painting abound with examples of this kind. We are struck at the first view with the exactness of imitation appearing in a carpet or any other article of household furniture; and we wonder at the skill and labour bestowed on a head in which every hair and wrinkle is accurately delineated; or at a group of cattle in forms and attitudes perfectly natural; but  
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after a short examination, we cease to look at what are no more than copies of realities everywhere meeting our eyes. It is the same with respect to portraits of persons whom we know: we feel momentary pleasure on surveying the closeness of the resemblance; but when that is past, unless some peculiar strain of sentiment should be awakened by association, we turn aside with indifference.

Now what does the mind discern in the Grecian statue abstractedly alluded to by Gibbon, which shall affect it in a manner materially different from the works of art above mentioned? There may, perhaps, be a greater quantity of skill exerted in giving to marble the resemblance to flesh, and the apparent life and action, conspicuous in some of the admired remains of ancient sculpture, than in any work of a Dutch pencil—though this is questionable—but still, imitation of a natural prototype is the essence of both. I know I shall be told of Apollos and Venuses which surpass in grace and beauty all ideas of the human form that can be derived from the observation of real nature. But, not to object that super-human figures in a human shape are in some degree akin to monsters—a truth, that a very accurate study  
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of anatomy and physiognomy would probably render strongly impressive—what are the gladiators, athletes, dancers, listening slaves, &c., which are among the most admired productions of the Grecian chisel, but forms of common life transferred to marble? Exquisite art, indeed, is displayed in these imitations; but the skill of the artist is almost the only idea they convey to the mind different from the same figures in flesh and blood. What in modern schools are called academy figures, whether drawn or modelled, are regarded only as lessons preparatory to that employment of the human form in compositions addressed to the heart or the imagination, which is justly considered as the noblest effort of art, joining the merit of invention to that of imitation. The taste of Greece itself was by no means so simple and chastised as to be contented with the naked statues so highly valued by the historian. When its great artists meant to elevate and astonish, they deserted common nature and ordinary materials. The most celebrated works of their sculptors, consecrated to religion, and calculated for the sublimest effect, were of colossal dimensions, and richly decorated with gold and ivory.

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I observe that artists who write upon subjects of their art are frequently alluding to the *quantity of mind* displayed in such or such productions of the pencil or chisel. I do not mean to deny that even single figures, nay, portraits, may show in the artist a strong and elevated conception of the mental character he intended to exhibit; as when Michael Angelo gave to the statue of the fiery pope Julius II. such an expression, that in the act of blessing the people it might be thought that he was pronouncing an anathema. But the arts of design are in this respect much restricted, not being able to do more than to give the prevailing and more prominent indications of internal emotions; and they fall infinitely short of the power of writing. What painter or sculptor could fully express the character of Sallust's Catiline or Milton's Satan \*? In the greater part of such

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\* When Reynolds painted the death of Cardinal Beaufort from Shakespear, he found no other expedient for distinguishing the expression of the despair of a guilty conscience from simple dying agonies, than that of embodying the poet's metaphorical language into a little imp at the bed's head; and this grotesque device has been commended by a truly ingenious brother-artist, fully impressed, no doubt, with the defective powers of his art in depicting what passes within the mind.



figures as the relics of Grecian art present, still less can be attempted ; for what elevation or complication of mental character can with propriety be given to a wrestler or a discobolos ? Indeed, a *want* of expression is almost a general attribute of the finest Grecian countenances, in which character or emotion is sacrificed to symmetry of feature. The mental exertion of the artist in forming such figures cannot therefore be supposed to extend further than the abstraction and combination of what is beautiful in external form, and the accurate observation of all the circumstances belonging to bodily action.

In the estimate of art we may therefore, I think, reasonably allot to *creation* the precedence over *imitation*, on the single ground of the accession to our store of ideas—the food of the mind—which we derive from the former. It is also capable of supplying images of much greater magnitude ; for the artist's power of imitation is limited to comparatively the smaller objects of nature. The sculptor, who gives a perfect resemblance of the human body, if he attempts to represent a mountain, a tree, or a river, dwindles them down to children's toys. The painter is confined to a few feet of can-

vass, in which, indeed, his art can exhibit the Alps or the ocean as they appear to a distant view, but cannot impress the mind with any adequate sense of their real vastness. Amplitude of dimension, one undoubted source of the sublime, can be created by no other art than that of architecture, which can scarcely be said to imitate any thing, though fancied resemblances have been pointed out in some of its constituent parts. A great edifice is a creation of human power and contrivance that cannot fail, even in the rudest form, to aggrandize man to himself, and expand his conceptions. Gibbon, I presume, would scarcely have hesitated to attach more value to a Grecian temple, as a monument of antiquity, than to a Grecian statue; yet the construction of those buildings was remarkably simple and artificial. What the architecture of the demolished palaces of king Sapor was, he knew as little as any of his readers; and his epithet *barbaric* is no more than classical cant. If they bore any resemblance to that style of oriental building of which Mr. Daniell has given us specimens of great antiquity, neither grandeur of design, nor fanciful variety and richness of ornament, could have been wanting

ing to them. And I should suppose that no liberal inquirer into the productions of ancient art, and the history of manners connected with them, could regard with indifference or contempt any relics, in whatever style, of an age and country which we know to have been far advanced in civilized luxury. Even the Egyptian pyramids, void as they are of utility and refined art, possess a consequence from their vast bulk and long duration, that renders them of much greater value to the speculatist than any single remain of painting or sculpture. But when magnitude is united with useful and ornamental contrivances, all conspiring to form a whole, devoted to purposes of splendor and magnificence, and carrying back the mind to ages long past and modes of life only known in the records of history, it is surely a petty fastidiousness to regard the work with contempt, because it deviates from those models which have accidentally obtained the exclusive admiration of what is termed *taste*. What should we think of a connoisseur who would be ready to consign to destruction all the fine cathedrals which are the most striking objects of art in this island, because they bear the name of *gothic*, and violate every principle of Grecian architec-

ture? We justly admire these relics of a period in many respects deficient in mental culture, since we cannot view them without imbibing ideas of grandeur, solemnity, variety, labour, and skill, that nothing else of the kind could impart in an equal degree, and which are absolute acquisitions to the furniture of our imaginations. He who had never seen one of these edifices could form no conception of them; and I once heard an intelligent American declare, that his sensations on first entering an English cathedral were worth purchasing by a voyage across the Atlantic. The oriental architecture, as far as we are made acquainted with it, possesses many of the same attractions. The extent and height of its masses, the singularity of its forms, the airy lightness of its spires and pinnacles, the richness and delicacy of its ornaments, appeal to principles in the mind anterior to rules of art, and which cannot fail of an operation upon those whose feelings are not deadened and perverted by prejudice. If the architecture in Sapor's age was in a similar style, nothing could less deserve the title of *barbaric*, annexing to that word any other meaning than what Grecian and Roman pride affixed to it, which, in fact, implied nothing more

more than *foreign*; and he who would turn away his eyes from such a relic to fix them upon a Torso fished up from the Tiber, must, in my opinion, have a taste strangely vitiated by the pedantry of connoisseurship. Had the Apollo of Belvidere and the Venus of Medicis never existed, the modern artist would have been at no loss for models of a perfect human figure; and the accuracy of his imitation might have been improved by the aid of the modern anatomist. With what exactness and elegance are many animals now drawn, of which antiquity has left either no copies, or very incorrect ones! and why should not the student of nature attain by the same means to a masterly delineation of the human form? But a work of invention is the product of an individual mind, and, when once destroyed, might never be renewed. Many such, it is true, have little intrinsic value; but when we can infer from collateral circumstances that they must have possessed one of the most striking properties of works of art—that of impressing the mind with new ideas of human power and contrivance—it is gross prepossession to dismiss them without regret, merely on account of their dissimilarity to other productions which we have been *taught* to admire.

ON  
THE EQUIVOCAL CHARACTER  
OF INSANITY.

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AMONG the moral pieces of Horace, there are few more entertaining than the third Satire of the second book, in which the poet, under the person of Damasippus, maintains the thesis, That insanity may be predicated of the bulk of mankind, as well as of those who are formally pronounced insane. This Damasippus is described as a great virtuoso, a nice judge of ancient works of art, and an adept in calculating the value of fine houses and gardens. This turn led him to be a constant frequenter of auctions, and, in the natural course of things, to squander all his property. When he found himself a ruined man, in a fit of vexation at his folly, he hurried away to the Tiber with the intention of drowning himself. By good fortune, however, he fell in by the way with a Stoic of his acquaintance, who diverted him from his purpose by offering to prove that he had

had no reason to think worse of himself than of the rest of mankind, who, examined by the test of philosophy, would all appear as insane as he. Damasippus then proceeds to repeat to Horace the Stoic's train of argumentation. He begins with inquiring what madness is, and defines it to be every species of mental blindness which proceeds from folly, or from ignorance of the truth of things. From this assumption it is not difficult for him to comprehend among the insane every man who is subject to the dominion of a ruling passion, or who deviates in his conduct from the ordinary rules of prudence and good sense. He then, in a lively and dramatic style of narrative, proceeds to give examples of such insanity in the avaritious, the ambitious, the superstitious, the spendthrift, the lover, &c. closing with an attack upon the mental soundness of Horace himself.

It is manifest that, in this piece of pleasantry, the writer has assumed a principle in its extreme for the purpose of scattering the shafts of satire through all ranks and conditions; but without admitting the stoical dogma to its full extent, it may serve as the ground of a sober discussion of an interesting question:

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What is the essence of insanity ?

Of this question various solutions have been given, founded upon metaphysical distinctions, which, though displaying much acuteness, have been inapplicable to many cases of mental derangement, and have proved useless in practice. On the whole, I find nothing more precise advanced in answer to the inquiry, than that insanity consists in a manner of thinking and acting different from that of the majority of mankind ; so that the reply of the patient in Bedlam who was asked, what he was put there for? seems to have been perfectly correct: " I thought the world mad, and the world thought me mad, and I was out-voted." This definition, however, though perhaps not susceptible of limitation in words, is manifestly too comprehensive to be acted upon ; since there are numerous individuals who in some of their opinions and habits are at open variance with the majority, and yet whom no one thinks of treating as madmen. There must therefore be something extraordinary either in the kind or degree of such difference, to justify an actual charge of insanity.

The plainest case of this nature is when a person fancies things relative to himself, or to  
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the objects around him, totally different from what they appear to every other mind; as when a man supposes himself to be a king or an emperor; or sees and hears what is invisible or inaudible to every one else. Thus the citizen of Argos, mentioned by Horace, conceived himself, while sitting in an empty theatre, to be a spectator of admirable tragedies, and took great pleasure in the delusion. Yet he was one,

*Cætera qui vitæ servaret munia recto  
More; bonus sane vicinus, amabilis hospes,  
Comis in uxorem, posset qui ignoscere servis,  
Et signo læso non insanire lagenæ;  
Posset qui rupem et puteum vitare patentem:*

which lines Pope has thus imitated;

*In all but this, a man of sober life,  
Fond of his friend, and civil to his wife;  
Not quite a madman if a pàsty fell,  
And much too wise to walk into a well.*

The present reign has afforded a number of competitor kings and queens of England, some of whom have been content to enjoy their dignities in a quiet way, while others have urged their claims in such a manner as to render it necessary to put them under confinement. The courts of law are not unfrequently troubled with importunate suitors, who vociferously  
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urge fancied rights to hereditary property; some of whom probably have originally had such notions put into their heads by sanguine or crafty people, and have been led to brood over them till they could think of nothing else. Here we begin to perceive that mixture of reason and insanity which is so perplexing in theory, and often not less so in the practice of life. A strong impression made upon a susceptible mind shall sometimes induce an erroneous conception which no exertions of argumentation, either by the person himself or his friends, can correct. I have been told of a respectable foreigner who being once laughed at on some trifling account, was so much hurt and humiliated, that ever afterwards he was fully persuaded that all the ballad-singers in the streets were engaged in turning him into ridicule; and when their songs were purchased and brought to him by his companions in order to convince him of his mistake, he eluded the force of the evidence by saying that what they sold was not what they sung. In other points no man could talk or behave more rationally. This case, with that of the Rev. Simon Brown, who imagined that his soul or thinking faculty had gradually been wasting till it had totally perished, and at the same

same time was writing books full of learning and sound argument, would probably be referred by physicians to those *hallucinations* of the mind which occasionally attend hypochondriac affections, and make a man fancy that his nose is too big to pass through a door, or his legs too slender to bear his weight, with other similar imaginations which want nothing but permanency to be entitled to the denomination of real lunacy. To this head may be referred certain rooted antipathies and prepossessions which sometimes take hold of persons in other respects of sound mind, and influence their conduct only so far as such feelings are concerned. Of this a remarkable instance occurred within memory, in which a man of fortune, of a respectable character, fancied that his brother, a clergyman of the most unspotted reputation, had made an attempt to poison him; and under the influence of this persuasion, broke off all intercourse with him during life, and disinherited him at his death. His will, however, being disputed, this groundless opinion (as no one doubted it to be) was regarded by the court as a proof of a partial insanity, though no other circumstance was adduced which could render him suspected of derangement.

rangement. But how very equivocal and indefinite must be that state of mind which suffers a man to pass unquestioned through all the acts of a long life, and is only manifested in the concluding one!

Of conceptions of things widely different from those of the greater part of mankind, who are more striking examples than the tribe of fanciful theorists and extravagant projectors? These persons entertain with full conviction propositions that to common sense appear manifestly absurd; and are totally blind to objections and obstacles that to every one else appear insurmountable. The theorist will stake his reputation, and the projector his fortune, upon such persuasions, insensible to the dangers to which both are exposed. There may, indeed, in the first of the two, be a purpose of becoming distinguished for maintaining singular and paradoxical opinions, which the world is apt to regard as a proof of extraordinary acuteness; but in most of these cases I am inclined to believe that the speculator is *bond fide* deluded by his own notions. That Descartes and Berkley were real Cartesians and Berkleyians, and that Warburton believed Shakespear to have written according to his emendations,

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I am unwilling to doubt, though men of plain sense readily see through their extravagancies. With respect to projectors, they usually give undoubted proof of their good faith by first ruining themselves, though they may afterwards practise some artifice in associating partners in their ruin. It is often happy for men of uncommon ingenuity that they are not in circumstances to carry their ingenious plans into effect; since what is harmless amusement on paper might draw after it serious consequences if reduced to practice. Had a late distinguished philosopher and poet attempted to put in execution his schemes of regulating the winds by chemical mixtures, and improving the climates of the frigid and torrid zones by towing ice-islands from the pole to the equator, he would have run great hazard of being enrolled

..... *fœcunda in gente Menent.*

If we enter the regions of fanaticism and enthusiasm, we find ourselves treading closely indeed upon the borders of madness, and the line of separation is almost imperceptible. “*Procul procul este profani—totoque absistite luco!*” Far off, all ye who wish to preserve the profaneness of reason, while inspiration holds

holds her orgies with her frantic votaries. Inspiration, indeed, necessarily implies being actuated by a mind or spirit alien to that of the inspired person, who may therefore properly be said to be *beside himself*. Whenever this extraneous impulse is not from the only pure and authentic source, it must be deemed either diabolical possession or insanity; and there are few rational thinkers at this time, it may be presumed, who will not rather impute it to the latter than the former. The ancients were ready enough to attribute the extravagancies of Bacchanals and votaries of Cybele to a temporary madness; and represented even the utterers of oracles as agitated by a kind of phrensy; and we may safely ascribe the same influence to our modern seers of sights and dreamers of dreams, unless where the spirit of imposture is the more obvious inspirer. Sometimes indeed they seem very singularly to be combined in the same person; for such is the contagious nature of enthusiasm, that it is apt to lay hold in earnest upon those who have counterfeited it for a purpose, or have consorted with such as have felt or acted it. This quality it is, which sometimes renders fanaticism dangerous to the public peace; for were it only the malady of a few

few individuals, it might be suffered to take its natural course ; which would probably be that of its gradual extinction in all who had only received it in a secondary way, leaving to the discipline of a madhouse the few in whom it was an original and constitutional disease of the mind. The Adamites of Amsterdam might have been committed to the chastisement of colds and rheumatisms, had they not offended against public decency ; and indeed the most incurable enthusiasts are often of so harmless a species that seclusion from society is a harsher expedient than the case requires, and slight or ridicule is the proper corrective.

Nearly akin to the exaltation of the spirits occasioned by enthusiasm, is the case of violent and uncontrollable passions, which frequently reduce a man to a state scarcely distinguishable from madness. "*Ira furor brevis est,*" says Horace ; and a modern writer has happily characterized an habitually passionate man as "a madman with lucid intervals." The furious outrages to which such persons are impelled in their fits of phrensy, sufficiently justify this idea of their condition ; and it would be extremely difficult to establish any criterion which should clearly discriminate them from  
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decided lunatics. Among the latter I have known some whose only symptoms of mental disorder were excessive irritability of temper, joined with a proneness to suspect affronts and injuries that were never intended, while the intellectual powers remained uncommonly acute and vigorous. Without meaning any disrespect to the memory of Mr. Burke, I may instance his dagger-scene in the House of Commons, and the perpetual exasperation of mind under which he laboured near the close of life, while the atrocities of the French Revolution were transacting, as proofs of a temporary privation of the power of self-government resulting from excess of the irascible feelings. It suggests, indeed, a very humiliating idea of the sway of human reason, to be told (as they who frequent promiscuous company often are) that there are certain topics which must not be touched upon in the presence of certain individuals, lest they should break out into displays of unseemly violence. What is this caution but an avowal that we live among people who are not masters of themselves, and are fitter for a madhouse than for sober and rational society?

As the extreme of high and fiery spirits is just on the verge of one species of insanity, so  
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the gloom and despondency of low spirits, closely borders on another species. Melancholy madness, in fact, scarcely admits of any other characteristic than that of the mind's meditating so intensely upon some one distressful idea, as to be disabled from all the ordinary functions, and insensible to all the enjoyments, of life; and the same may be affirmed of every state of exquisite grief, or deep depression while it continues. The identity of these affections seems at least to be allowed by coroners' juries, who generally are satisfied with the proof of previous dejection of spirits, to justify a verdict of insanity in cases of suicide. To be brought from a mental cause to hate life, the love of which is so strongly rooted in human nature, may indeed with some justice be regarded as the sign of such a change in the natural disposition as indicates a deranged intellect. The horrible idea of final reprobation and eternal misery, which haunts the imagination of so many converts to a gloomy system of faith, seems scarcely compatible with the preservation of reason; and if it were not in most cases succeeded by an opposite state of mind, all such devotees might be expected to sink into the condition which has

been the lot of too many of them. If the fear of partial and temporary evils frequently suspends all exercise of the understanding, what must be the effect of a strong apprehension of exquisite and everlasting misery! Every one disposed to entertain such sentiments should repeat to himself

“ O, that way madness lies, let me shun that ! ”

Another kind of deviation from the common practice of mankind consists of oddities and singularities in manners and habits of life. We are in general so much the creatures of custom, and so fashioned by imitation, that, even in things apparently indifferent, we follow the multitude with as much exactness as if we were bound by the obligations of law or religion. But there are always certain individuals in society who venture to break through these shackles, and make use of their right of free-agency on small, as well as on great occasions. This, however, is done at a risk ; for, diversities in common things being most obvious to common observation, nothing so much conduces to give an impression of defect in the mental constitution as peculiarities of this kind. Indeed, when carried to a certain length, they may justly warrant

rant such conclusions; for all the most essential decorums of life are guarded only by custom; and one capable of disregarding public opinion so much as to violate all the feelings of conventional propriety, can scarcely be reckoned in possession of a sound understanding. Were a grave citizen of London to show himself on a hot day at the Exchange in a night-gown, cap, and slippers, though he might plead that it was the dress best accommodated to the season, he would be in some danger of a statute of lunacy. At the same time, were he to wear it all day at his country retreat, he would only be thought an odd man, inattentive to forms, and fond of his own way. This, in fact, is the character of many in our free country, who are not unfrequently men of superior minds, whose habits of thinking and acting for themselves in important matters have extended to trifles. Their deviations may make the vulgar stare; but it would be a sweeping clause indeed, that should declare every harmless whimsicality by which a man may be distinguished from his neighbours to be a valid proof of lunacy. When a late nobleman, who had more learning, law, and logic in his head than most of his order, was represented as incapable of making a will,

because he used to sit wrapt in his housekeeper's cloak, and occasionally supped on a roasted shoulder of mutton, the plea was justly disallowed; "for who can tell (said the chancellor) how far such a rule of inference may carry us?"

Not but that singularities, however trifling, if adopted without any adequate cause, and brought into the view of the public, may excite a suspicion of some latent irregularity in the mental frame, which may hereafter display itself in some more serious aberration. Either Addison or Steel, in a paper on this subject, mentions a gentleman of great respectability who rendered himself remarkable by wearing a short sword when long ones were in fashion. "I watched him narrowly (says the writer) for a course of years, continually expecting that he would break out into some extravagance; when at length, to the surprise of every body but myself, he married his maid." This story may possibly be a fiction: but in the chronicle of an Annual Register I met with a case of suicide preceded by symptoms of melancholic derangement, in a gentleman who frequented the higher circles, and who had long been noted for the peculiarity of wearing a  
hat

hat of the same shape for twenty years, notwithstanding all the intervening changes of fashion.

It is common in promiscuous company to meet with persons who have got what is called a *twist*, that is, some wrongheadedness or eccentricity of opinion or practice which distinguishes them from other mortals. This may consist in odd likings or antipathies, whimsical objects of pursuit, extravagant projects, absurd notions; any thing, in short, in which fancy preponderates over reason. Such a turn is sometimes perfectly harmless; but not unfrequently it is detrimental to a man's affairs, and exposes him to the censure or ridicule of the world. As, however, it does not injure the peace of society, it is accounted no subject for legal interference, but is suffered to take its course. Indeed, while the vices of men, which are manifestly ruinous to themselves and their families, are freely tolerated, it would be an inconsistency in legislation to assume a control over their follies. Many a collector of nick-nacks ends his course like Damasippus; but what a small proportion do such bankrupts bear to those who squander their fortunes on the common objects of luxury and debauchery!

On a consideration of the whole matter, it  
appears

appears to me that there is such a gradation in the deviations from right reason, that it is impossible to mark any point at which insanity, as distinguished from mental error in general, commences ; and that we must be contented with the merely practical definition, (which, too, is often difficult enough in its application,) that insanity is such a degree of irrationality as by the common consent of mankind is deemed a sufficient cause for restriction from the usual offices and privileges of men in the social state. This limitation will doubtless leave a great number of individuals masters of their actions, whom the philosopher would pronounce unsound in mind ; but the evil resulting from their extravagancies is less than that of too tight a rein held over free-agency ; and there is both amusement and instruction in contemplating all the vagaries of which the human mind is susceptible, as far as it can be done without material danger. Were even all the Bedlamites in the world let loose, they could not do a tenth of the mischief that is effected by the sober councils of kings and ministers devoted to schemes of ambition and cupidity. A Quixote on the throne is often as thoroughly quixotical as the Spanish knight-errant ; but  
with

with this difference, that he encounters fleets and armies instead of windmills and flocks of sheep, and fights with the arms of his subjects rather than his own. Did a power exist of committing to safe custody all such royal lunatics,

“ From Macedonia's madman to the Swede,”

this world would be a much quieter place than we find it.

**VERBAL**

## VERBAL REMARKS.

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### I. *On the words* REPUBLIC *and* COMMONWEALTH.

THE examples are numerous, in various languages, of the deviation of a word from its original and etymological signification, in consequence of certain casual associations, which, differently affecting different minds, have introduced ambiguity into the use of such words, and into reasonings founded upon the ideas annexed to them. In these cases, it is a service, not only to literature, but frequently to morals, to rectify these misconceptions, and to recall the proper and definite meaning of terms, that they may no longer, either with or without design, be employed so as to delude or perplex the unwary. It is my intention to take some of these words into consideration, with the hope that, by impartial and temperate discussion, some prevalent errors of which they are the subject may be corrected: and I shall begin with those placed at the head of this section.

The notion commonly attached in this country



try to the terms COMMONWEALTH and REPUBLIC, is that of a form of constitution susceptible, indeed, of many varieties, but uniform in its rejection of a *king*; and the appellation of *republican*, as applied to an individual or a party, is understood to imply abhorrence of kingly government. It is sufficiently obvious from what events in our annals this interpretation is derived; but temporary and local circumstances ought not to stamp a peculiar signification upon words common in their use to various ages and countries. It will therefore be proper to revert to their origin and history.

The Greeks made use of the expression *το κοινον*, or *τα κοινα*, to denote the *common* or *public* concerns of any body of men associated into a community; and they applied the term *πολιτεια* to the administration or form of government of the *πολις* or state. In Latin, the *το κοινον* is exactly rendered by *respublica*; the *πολις* is *civitas*; and the *πολιτεια* is *administratio reipublicæ vel civitatis*. As all these appellations were founded on the idea of a community of right and interest in the state among all its members, they were not compatible with *monarchy* properly so called, or *tyranny* (in the Greek sense of the word), because, in that form  
of

of government, every thing which is common or public in other constitutions is appropriated by an individual, who is conceived to possess the property of it, and to administer it according to his own pleasure. But the office of *king*, understanding by the title only the visible head of the state, and the administrator of its executive power, was not at all incompatible with the existence of a *respublica* ; and therefore the term *republic* is, without hesitation, applied to Sparta and other Grecian states, where kings were component parts of the government.

Our English word *commonwealth*, or *commonweal*, is precisely analogous to *respublica*, and has been used in at least as extensive a signification by accurate writers. Thus Locke, in his Treatise on Civil Government, says, “By *commonwealth* I must be understood all along to mean, not a democracy, or any form of government, but any independent community, which the Latins signified by the word *civitas*.” And this is the sense in which, he says, king James (surely no friend to democratical ideas) employs it. Nay, amidst the different *forms of a commonwealth*, Locke enumerates that in which the power of making laws is lodged in

*one*

*one man*, and his heirs after him ; but this is upon the supposition that it is a trust committed by the people—a case, I believe, that scarcely ever happened, except among those whom previous habits had inured to despotism. The proper use, then, of the word *commonwealth* is relative to the origin and authority, not the form, of government ; and every constitution which preserves the principle of a community of right and interest, as the basis whereon all civil authority is founded, may, under a variety of changes as to form, still retain the denomination of a commonwealth. The case is exactly paralleled by those associations for particular and limited purposes which constitute companies or fraternities, and which, in what manner soever they may choose to manage their common concerns, either personally, or by agents and officers to whom different degrees of power may be delegated, still retain in the body at large all the authority of the administration.

The term *republic*, as adopted in our language, has, by use, acquired a more confined signification than *commonwealth* ; being generally understood as denoting the *rule of many* in

in opposition to *monarchy*, or the *rule of one*. Thus Dr. Johnson, in his Dictionary, defines a republic to be “a state in which the power is lodged in more than one.” It is manifest that this definition includes all those constitutions, which, by a kind of solecism, are called *mixed monarchies*; for although the executive power may be single and independent, yet, if there exist a power to control in any effectual manner its exertions, the government cannot be said to be placed in *one hand*. Whilst then, from the sole circumstance of *division* of the supreme power, we apply the title of republic to constitutions so different as the hereditary aristocracies of Italy, the partially-elected ones of Holland and some cantons of Switzerland, the Swiss democracies, and the pure representative government with an executive president, of the United American states; we cannot consistently refuse the title to others which agree in this essential character, though they have an executive head styled a *king*. The late government of Poland always bore the name of a republic under that predicament. It is true its head or king was elective; as were those of Hungary and Bohemia before they fell under  
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the dominion of the house of Austria. But, essentially, every kingdom is elective in which, on any emergency, the people have assumed to themselves the prerogative of altering the course of hereditary succession; for by such an act they have testified that the regal authority emanates from themselves; and the limitations under which they have exercised this prerogative have been the result of their own discretion, not of any defect of power to make alterations, which must, in theory, be regarded as the same, whether the degree of change effected be great or small. It seems, therefore, to have been with no impropriety of language that a prelate (I think, Dr. Rundle) called the English government "a republic with a king at its head:" at least, he employed his terms with more accuracy than Addison, in his *Vision of Liberty*, (*Tatler*, No. 161.) who uses the word Commonwealth as synonymous with Democracy, and makes the Genius of Monarchy the representative of the English constitution; thus confounding the latter with the pure monarchies of the continent, in which there is no division of the supreme power.

If then, in the strictest language, every state which recognises a community of interest in  
its

its members is a *commonwealth*; and every form of government which has secured these interests by "lodging power in more hands than one" is *republican*, why should these terms bear an obnoxious import in a country where all parties profess to act upon these common interests, and where a division and balance of power has been the great object of the constitution? Ought they not rather to be employed to denote those principles in which all the friends of civil liberty, in its most tempered form, agree, and to be set in opposition to nothing but tyranny and despotism? The cant words *Whig* and *Tory* carry with them no proper meaning but that of a faction, and may be accommodated to any set of principles however inconsistent with former declarations. But the term *republican* or *commonwealth's-man* has a determinate meaning, and might, I should suppose, without hesitation be avowed by all who hold that government was instituted for the good of the whole; and that this good is best consulted by a proper division of the supreme authority.

## II. *On the words PEOPLE and POPULACE.*

Few words stand more prominent in political discussions than that of *people*, which is taken

taken in different acceptations by writers and speakers of different parties, who often artfully endeavour by the sense in which they employ it to convey impressions favourable to their arguments. Yet if we consider the term in its proper and original import, little doubt, I imagine, will remain of the signification that it ought to bear in correct language.

The Latin *populus* (whence *people* is obviously derived) properly and strictly signifies the *whole body* of a nation or civil community, and is exactly analogous to the Greek *δῆμος*. That this is its primary meaning cannot be doubted, when we observe its application to such a body when spoken of in general terms. For although no phrase is more familiar in Latin writers than *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, yet this limited sense is subordinate to the former; and the *populus* here denotes a *part* of the community only because the *senatus* is taken out of it:—it is, in fact, all the rest. In the opening of his History we find Livy proposing to treat on the affairs *populi Romani*; whom he soon after terms *princeps terrarum populus*; conformable to which lofty appellation is Virgil's

..... *populum* latè regem, belloque superbum :

A people reigning wide, and proud in war.

This

This is, likewise, the first sense ascribed by Dr. Johnson to the word *people*; and indeed he might have been content with this only sense, together with its variation of "men in general;" for when, after his usual mode of splitting senses, he adds those of "vulgar," and of "persons of a particular class," it is evident that his references authorize those significations only by prefixing some other word, as *common people*—*country people*, &c.

The proper use of the word is preserved in the ordinary phrase of *Prince and People*, as placed in contra-distinction; and I conceive a prince, king, or supreme governor, holding his office for life, and not amenable to the common laws of the state, to be the only person not included in the enumeration of *people*. No particular class of the community is exempted from the number; and though we have the division of Lords and Commons, both are equally portions of the *people of this realm*. This conception of the term is the only one which accords with the genius of a free state; to which it is essential that laws and privileges should be common to all its members, and that no line of separation should be drawn between one part of the subjects and another, at least in  
important



important concerns. Without a common appellation there cannot be a common interest; and every designation which excepts a portion out of the general mass, sets it up as an object of ill-will or suspicion, unless where it implies some distinction clearly connected with the public welfare. In those countries where patricians or noblesse have prided themselves in marking as strongly as possible their superiority to plebeians, and have supported it by the greatest number of exclusive prerogatives, they have been most liable to be deserted in times of public danger by the body of the nation, which has not been disposed to sympathize with them in losses of which it did not partake, or greatly to deprecate changes by which its condition was as likely to be ameliorated as to be made worse.

To confound *people* with *populace* has been a very common, though a shallow artifice of men who have at times been opposers of those notions of equality, which, carried to a certain extent, are the basis of all that deserves the name of freedom in governments. They have studiously, in all their reasonings, endeavoured to inculcate the idea of two classes in society, the respectable, orderly, and enlightened—and

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the base, turbulent, and ignorant—to the latter of which they have affected to appropriate the name of *people*; and, whenever the rights, voice, or will, of the people have been brought forward, they have chosen to regard them as applicable to the mere rabble. It is true, such is the distribution of the advantages of social life in human communities, that in almost all countries the mass of the people have been left destitute of the opportunities of mental cultivation, and by the want of property and the ordinary comforts of existence, have been rendered discontented, and debased in the scale of rational beings. But this part of society forms no proper class; for every thing between the lowest and the highest condition of subjects (especially in a country like ours, where free scope is given to the exertions of industry and ingenuity) is gradational, and no line can be drawn which shall separate the well-informed, well-principled, and independent members of the community from their opposites,—the only distinction worthy of consideration in a political view! Moreover, it is perfectly false in fact that the two pretended classes act separately upon public occasions; for the low are incapable of any combined or determinate exertions without

out the counsel and aid of the high, to whom they are generally subservient in their schemes, whether selfish or patriotic, with no other views for themselves than some vague notions of rectifying abuses by which they suppose themselves aggrieved, and which notions are easily made to coincide with plans for general good.

Let those persons, therefore, who accustom themselves to use the word *people* in a contemptuous sense, and to regard it as implying all that is ignoble and worthless in society, consider what right they have to exempt themselves from the number to which this designation belongs. If not part of the people, what are they? What other appellation can they claim which shall mark a distinction in their favour? Are there not occasions in which they are proud of participating in the title? Have they never challenged a fellowship with a brave, a free, and enlightened *people*? The phrase *majesty of the people* (borrowed from the Romans) is said, when first pronounced in parliament, to have excited a laugh, but, when persisted in by the speaker, to have made a serious impression. In reality, it includes all the genuine majesty of a nation; for the majesty of a king is only a figurative attribute, derived to him as a kind

of personified image of the combined power and dignity of the people. From them it is reflected; and to them, when they choose to assert it, it must return. A Lewis XIV. strutting among his courtiers, and led by their flattery to believe that in his person actually resides all the greatness of the state, is, in fact, a more ridiculous object than a self-constituted body of political mechanics, who, at least, possess the strength of their united arms. But to bring the monarch to reason, and to overawe the turbulent *populace*, the general mass of wisdom and power existing in the *people* is alone to be relied upon.

### III. *On the words LOYAL and LOYALTY.*

To the well-founded observation, that from the shades of difference which words often acquire in passing from a primary to a derivative language inferences may be deduced concerning the modes of thinking in different countries, the English use of the words which are the subjects of this section may at first sight appear a remarkable exception. *Leále*, *Lealtà*, in Italian; *Loyal*, *Loyauté*, in French, have the signification of frank, sincere, honest, and of good faith;

faith; whereas *Loyal* and *Loyalty* in English (manifestly the same words in their origin) are entirely limited in their sense to fidelity and attachment to a *king*, except that, by a kind of metaphor, our poets sometimes apply them to denote the same affections towards a mistress. This diversity was the source of much mis-translation after the French revolution, by our newspaper writers, who were doubtless surprised to find that people, when become republican, ostentatiously applying the term *loyal* to their sentiments and proceedings. Had these translators, however, been better acquainted with the language, various instances would have occurred to them explanatory of its true meaning. Thus Moliere, in the “*Tartuffe*,” ironically names a Norman serjeant at mace *Mons. Loyal*; upon which one of the characters in the play remarks,

Ce Monsieur Loyal porte un air bien déloyal :

This Mr. Honest looks very like a knave.

Philip de Comines even applies the word to the Creator, who, he says, has “*loyaument tenu à toutes gens*” the promise which he made when he created man.

The motto of one of our ancient noble families is “*Loyaulté n’a honte*”—which might  
be

be rendered, Faithfulness incurs no shame—though possibly such a version would not be adopted at the present day.

It is not difficult to conceive how a word signifying fidelity in general should come to be exclusively applied to what might appear the most meritorious exercise of the quality; but the wonder is, that England should have been the country in which alone the word has been so limited. There is no doubt that, according to modern usage, the sole meaning affixed to the English word *loyalty* is that passionate attachment to the person and interests of the reigning king, as such, which almost all public men profess, and which many seem to consider as the first of political virtues. I am not able exactly to trace the progress of this appropriation of a word which once had among us at least the extension of signifying faithfulness to an obligation of service of any kind. Thus Shakespear not only, in the high-flown language of a lover, speaks of writing

..... *loyal* cantos of neglected love;

but makes the good old Adam say to Orlando,

..... I will follow thee

To the last gasp with truth and *loyalty*.

This dutiful attachment of a servant to his  
master

master is a sense of the word not noted by Johnson, who limits its use to fidelity to a prince and a mistress. He quotes, however, a line of Milton as exemplifying the meaning of "faithful in love," which appears to me to refer to the more extended signification above hinted : it occurs in the poet's beautiful address to Wedded Love :

..... by thee  
Founded in reason, *loyal*, just, and pure.

The word is here evidently used as a synonym to *constant* and *faithful to an engagement*, without limitation to a particular instance. I should suppose that the reign of Elizabeth, which, to the profound veneration for royalty that prevailed under her father, added the chivalrous devotion of which her sex was then the object, was the period in which the modern appropriation of the term principally took place. Possessing this double claim to the reverence and sentimental attachment of her subjects, she was treated with a fervour of submission nearly amounting to adoration ; and the *passion of loyalty* appears fully formed in the language both of the poets and the statesmen of that day. James I. was not a sovereign adapted to inspire the real feelings attending this display ;

play ; nor, perhaps, would his son have done so in any high degree, had it not been for the contest between republicanism and monarchy which agitated his reign, and of which he was finally the victim. The partisans of the latter thought they could not too strongly express their attachment to regal government ; and the sufferings of the king, with his dignified behaviour under them, were calculated to excite the warmest emotions in his behalf. Loyalty was therefore renewed in all its force both as a passion and a principle, and in the breast of a cavalier it took place of every public, and almost of every private affection. It required no personal favours for its support ; for, as Butler in a *serious* strain observes,

..... Loyalty is still the same  
Whether it win or lose the game ;  
True as the dial to the sun,  
Although it be not shone upon.

As the fall and restoration of monarchy were intimately connected with those of the established religion, the principle of loyalty, thus understood and limited, received all the support that could be given to it from that religion when become triumphant ; and the duty of almost unbounded submission and attachment to the

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the person wearing the crown was inculcated by the clergy as conjunct and scarcely inferior to that of similar affections towards the Supreme Being. Charles II., little as he was entitled to these sentiments from his personal character, succeeded to them in their full force; and notwithstanding the opposition his schemes incurred during part of his reign, it closed with laying every other political principle at the feet of loyalty. In the works of Dryden and other poets, as well as in those of numerous prose writers, secular and ecclesiastic, this was the prime public virtue held up for admiration and imitation; and if any thing remained to be done in restricting the meaning of the term to devotion to the possessor of the crown, it was now completely effected.

As the purpose of this discussion is merely verbal, I shall not enter into a consideration of the worth and propriety of such a principle under a mixed constitution like the English. I cannot, however, forbear to advert to a passage of lord Clarendon, a writer whom no one will suspect of heterodox opinions concerning monarchy. Speaking of a public character, he says, "He had never any veneration for the court, but only such *loyalty* to the king as the law

law required ;” in which sentence he seems to point out, and without censure, a measure for this affection, which distinguishes it from the blind and passionate attachment that some would inculcate under its name. The passage also suggests a probable etymology of the word from *law* (*loy*), as implying a due regard to *legal* obligation : and thus we find the modern French using it with particular reference to the faith of treaties and compacts.

On the whole, considering that the attachment enjoined by the principle of loyalty is to the wearer of the crown *merely as such*, and without regard to his personal qualities, it might be sufficient, in general, to confine the sentiment within the bounds of Cordelia’s honest declaration,

I love your Majesty  
According to my bond, nor more nor less.

#### IV. *On the words REFORM and REFORMATION.*

Johnson in his Dictionary has assigned to these words the simple signification of “change from worse to better,” thus making them synonymous, or nearly so, with *amendment* or *improvement*, and consequentially implicating them

them in a share of the meaning of *alteration* and *innovation*. The effect of such an approximation upon minds of a certain stamp may readily be conceived ; and in fact it has almost consigned *reform* to the catalogue of those ill-sounding words which produce a shuddering in delicate political nerves. But in reality its proper sense includes none of these dreaded notions. To *reform* (*re-formare*) is to *form again*, and accurately, to restore the form in which the thing first appeared. Thus Ovid, speaking of Iolaus as miraculously restored to youth, calls him “ *primos reformatus in annos ;*” and the same poet, in the person of Proteus instructing Peleus how to manage Thetis, directs him to hold her fast in all her transformations “ *dum quod fuit ante reformet.*” The name of the *Reformation* given to the change in religion by which the errors of popery were abrogated, certainly was not meant to imply the notion of *bettering*, as referring to that which primitive Christianity had been, but only a restoration of that state. It was, indeed, regarded as a “change from worse to better,” but not simply so ; for such a change would ensue on the conversion of a nation of idolatrous heathens ;  
which

which event could not be properly called a reformation.

To *reform*, then, is the very reverse of to *innovate*, since it looks back to something which has already existed under the same title as that which now subsists in an altered and vitiated state. This, I presume, is the idea entertained by those who are advocates for the *reform of Parliament*; for although some may meditate *improvements*, conformable to the present state of the nation, yet I conceive their intention substantially to be, to *restore* or *redintegrate* the ancient representation of the commons of this realm. And in every case, where the purpose is to bring back to its pristine and uncorrupted state an approved institution which has been deteriorated, or perverted from its original intention, there seems to be no other room for hesitation than with regard to the best means of carrying the design into effect.

I conclude this article with the literary remark, that to speak, as is commonly done, of the “reformation of abuses,” is a gross impropriety of language; since it is not the *abuse* which is to be *reformed*, but the thing in which it existed. Bribery in elections is an abuse:

*remove*

*remove the abuse, and you reform the mode of election ; that is, you restore it to its state before the abuse took place.*

V. *On the words REBEL and REBELLION.*

The Latin use and derivation of *rebel* (*rebellare*) implies the act of *fighting again*, or resuming arms which had been laid down ; and the word is commonly employed in that language upon occasions in which a people who had been compelled to submit to a superior force, and undergo the law of the conqueror, have taken an opportunity of vindicating their original independence, and throwing off the yoke. This resistance to imposed authority, however provoked by tyranny and oppression, was always regarded by the Romans as a capital crime, and punished with the greatest severity. It is obvious, indeed, that a nation which set out upon a plan of aggrandizement by conquest, could not adopt any other policy. If their treaties with the vanquished did not confer a *right* to future dominion, all their acquisitions could be considered as only temporary, and held by the immediate tenure of the sword. The same opinion was naturally adopted by other powerful

powerful and ambitious states; and thus *rebellion* at length acquired the signification assigned to it by modern writers, of "Insurrection against lawful authority" (*Johnson*). But in the application of the term it usually happens that the authority itself is the matter in dispute, and that the party in possession assumes the justice of its own cause by stigmatizing the adverse party with an opprobrious title. Hence it is commonly said that defeat alone identifies the *rebel*; and it is curious to remark with what fluctuation, according to the course of events, the word is used during the progress of a civil contest. This was strikingly exemplified in the war which terminated with American independence. The insurgents against the authority of the mother country, the lawful extent of which was the point in question, were at first without hesitation termed *rebels*; and the politeness of General Gage in his proclamation destined their leaders "to the cord." After Burgoyne's capture, the term began to lose ground. The Americans were civilly called "our deluded fellow-subjects;" and the gazettes simply denominated them "provincials." The termination of the contest converted a *rebellion* into a *revolution*. Had not the struggle  
against

against arbitrary power in the reign of Charles I., after its temporary success, concluded with the Restoration, it would never have been stigmatized in history with the appellation of the *Grand Rebellion*; which term, indeed, is still rather the shibboleth of a party, than a title employed by unprejudiced writers. When there are competitors for the same crown, it is usual for each party in turn, or at the same time, to pronounce the other *rebels*, and to treat them as such when it can be done without fear of retaliation. This practice was so fatal to the English nobility in the vicissitudes of the wars of York and Lancaster, that it was found necessary under Henry VII. to pass an act to exempt from the penalties of high treason those who should take up arms in defence of the king *de facto*. A hard case frequently occurs (as lately in respect to the poor Tyrolese), when a province, in consequence of a compulsory treaty, is transferred from a master to whom it is attached, to one whom it abhors. If either the sentiment of independence, or of habitual affection to former sovereigns, impels such a people to attempt to throw off the new yoke, they are immediately declared in a state of rebellion. But, although in strictness it  
may

may be said that they are resisting "lawful authority,"—as far as the transfer of a people without their own consent can confer such authority,—it is cruel to brand their honourable principles with a term to which power has attached a flagitious meaning. If the Spaniards shall be temporarily compelled to renounce a native sovereign for a foreign usurper imposed upon them at the point of the bayonet, every generous effort to recover their lost rights will be stigmatized by their invader with the name of *rebellion*, till final success shall have obliterated the appellation.

The practical inference from this discussion is, that whenever the ruling powers stigmatize an armed opposition to their dominion with the title of *rebellion*, and place the authors of it in the odious and penal situation of *rebels*, it would be both prudent and candid first to consider those words in their original neutral signification of *taking up arms again*; and not hastily to adopt the superinduced sense of *resistance to lawful authority*, without some examination of the real lawfulness or justice of that authority.



VI. *On the word ABDICATE.*

It is well known that at the period of the Revolution a warm debate arose between the two Houses of Parliament concerning the word proper to be used for the act of king James in vacating the throne. The Commons in their vote had proposed the term *abdicated*, which by the Lords was amended to *deserted*; but the former persisted in their expression for reasons which are declared in a celebrated speech of Mr. (afterwards Lord) Somers, who had been appointed one of their managers in the conference with the Lords. The argument of Somers on this occasion is considered as a master-piece of verbal investigation; yet I cannot but think that the application of the word *abdicate* to the case in question was supported by reasons altogether sophistical and illusory.

The Lords affirmed “that the common application of the word amounts to a voluntary express renunciation;” and this not being the fact with respect to James’s vacating the throne, they substituted the word *desert*. Somers therefore labours to prove that the proper signification of the word *abdicate* is that of renouncing or relinquishing a thing, “whether it be done

by express words, or by doing such acts as are inconsistent with the holding of it." But in the instances of the latter which he produces from different authors, the act bears directly and manifestly upon the point: thus, when a man sells himself for a slave, abdicating his freedom is an inseparable consequence, or rather, is the same thing expressed in another manner. But James, by his arbitrary acts, certainly did not suppose that he renounced the office of king; nor were they incompatible with that office according to his notions of it, or, perhaps, according to the exercise of it by former English monarchs. The extent of the royal prerogative was the very point on which he and his subjects were at issue; and however the question of more or less were decided, he could not mean that his relation to his people as sovereign should depend upon the decision. This idea of abdication can therefore be regarded only as a remote and forced inference, in which the two parties would not agree, and which is totally adverse to the supposition of a voluntary act, like that of the abdication of Charles V., Christina, and other sovereigns.

As little is that condition to be found in the circumstance of his "withdrawing himself out  
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of the kingdom," which is apparently added to help out the deficiencies of the other plea; since it was the consequence of a foreign invasion abetted by his own subjects, and would at most amount only to a temporary desertion.

The true cause of this abuse of language is to be sought in the opposition of sentiment between the Whigs and Tories who cooperated in the great national event of the Revolution. The former, who acted alone in Scotland, did not hesitate there to say that king James, by his tyrannical and illegal conduct, had *forfeited* the crown; which was undoubtedly the proper expression according to their ideas of government. They would probably have used the same word in England, had they been strong enough to carry their measures without the Tories: but that party, who constituted the majority of the nation, could never be brought to acquiesce in such an assumption of judicial authority by the people over their sovereign; and being opposed in their favourite term of *desertion*, which might be construed as not precluding a future resumption of the regal office, they at length consented, reluctantly, to adopt the word *abdication* as a medium, though, like most mediums and compromises, it accorded

with the views of neither party. It is happy for the nation that the *act* was more decisive than the language by which it was justified.

VII. *On the words* INFIDELITY, INFIDEL, BLASPHEMY, BLASPHEMER, IMPIETY.

Though it is obviously necessary that every action or quality important to society should have a specific designation, yet it is desirable that this should express no more than the bare circumstance belonging to it, and not include, by association, other ideas, especially such as imply moral decisions in which men's opinions may by no means agree. Names of this abusive kind are often fixed by a ruling party upon things in their own nature indifferent, or concerning which human authority has no right to decide, for the purpose of throwing odium upon principles or sentiments which they find inimical to their own interest. Some of the words already treated of afford examples of this policy ; but in none is it more conspicuous than in those placed at the head of this section.

Dissent from the established religion of a country is a circumstance which it may be proper to note by a peculiar appellation ; but  
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that such dissent is in its own nature criminal, will scarcely be asserted by any but those who hold that all religion is the creature of the state, and that its truth is no object of consideration. But as religions, the tenets of which are incompatible with each other, cannot all be true; and as inquiry and doubt concerning any may proceed from the purest motives, and from the unavoidable diversity of argumentative conclusions, is it not manifestly unjust to designate simple disagreement by a term conveying the notion of moral depravity?

INFIDELITY is the negative of *fidelity*, a word signifying the high virtues of honesty, integrity, and faithfulness to engagements; and in English, the positive term is always employed in this sense. Thus Mr. Gibbon, giving a reason for his reply to the strictures of Mr. Davis, says, that he found him attacking “not the *faith*, but the *fidelity* of the historian.” But although we have appropriated the word *faith* to *religious belief*, yet it has been thought proper to distinguish the opposite of this by the word *infidelity*, thus confounding a mere dissent of the mind with the breach of a moral duty. This word is still in frequent use in its proper acceptation. Thus Dr. Johnson gives  
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as one of its senses, “treachery, deceit, breach of contract or trust;” and he exemplifies this meaning by a quotation relative to the *infidelities* between husband and wife. In the conversion of the Latin word *fides* to the Christian signification of *faith*, probably a notion of the obligations incurred by a Christian convert was included; otherwise it is not obvious how the very distinct ideas of *belief* or assent of the understanding, and *adherence to contract or promise*, should coalesce in one term. But this combination has been unfortunate for the mere disbeliever of a prevailing system, if it have associated to an unavoidable conclusion of his reason, a depravation of his moral principles. The word *infidel*, with this mass of obloquy attached to it, is used technically to denote all who reject Christianity; “unbelievers, miscreants, and pagans,” says Johnson’s Dictionary. Whether or not it be expedient that all such persons should rank under a common appellation, I do not here inquire; but that the name should imply nothing more than the common fact, I think may be justly required. A sense of this propriety has induced the more candid and moderate controversialists to employ the term *unbelievers*, which, though defective in

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in precision—since it might be asked, “Unbelievers in what!”—yet is readily understood where it is used, and insinuates nothing that it does not express. It is true, where bigotry so far prevails that every thing odious is included in disbelief of the received faith, it matters little by what term that dissent is denominated; and the Mahometans annex as much detestation and contempt to their *giaour*, as Christians can possibly do to *infidel*, though the word has an entirely different derivation. But this feeling is not universal; and where there is a choice of two terms, one opprobrious, the other civil, a candid man will not hesitate which to prefer. They indeed, who find their account in fostering a prejudice against an antagonist, will not readily renounce so easy a method of doing it as that of fixing upon him a vituperative appellation.

Another word of frequent polemic use, and conveying a charge of which the person applying it constitutes himself the judge, is **BLASPHEMY**. The original signification of this word is well known to be *evil-speaking* in general; but in the English, and other modern languages, it has been adopted as a technical term limited to that kind of evil-speaking which  
consists

consists in impiety, or irreverence towards the Supreme Being. No one will deny that there is such a crime, and that it is often sufficiently manifest to justify the imputation. But in the wide diversity of men's religious ideas, cases perpetually occur in which, what one holds sacred, another regards as profane; whence unavoidably result reciprocal charges of impiety, which may be bandied from party to party eternally. It is impossible in the most guarded terms to controvert that claim to divine honour or authority, in persons or doctrines, which is the basis of particular religious systems, without giving such a perception of impiety to their votaries as shall appear to them to justify the reproach of *blasphemy*. How, for example, can the mildest opposer of Mahometism argue against the pretended divine mission of its founder, without involving him in such a charge of imposture as shall strike with horror the pious Mussulman! Here is no medium—his claim must be either admitted or rejected, and the designation of his nature and character follows of course.

The Roman-catholic doctrine of the real presence of Christ (and therefore of God himself) in the consecrated wafer, inconceivably absurd  
and



and monstrous as a Protestant may think it, is found by experience to be the tenet which has the firmest hold upon the minds of members of that communion, and that to which the highest sanctity is annexed. The Gallican church, which, from its resistance to Papal authority, almost incurred the charge of heresy, appears emulously to have vindicated its orthodoxy by its strenuous defence of this doctrine. At the conference between the two religions in France held at Poissy in the sixteenth century, Beza, the advocate of the Reformers, adverting to transubstantiation, said, "We affirm that the body of Jesus Christ is as distant from bread and wine, as the highest heaven from the earth." The expression was inflated, but conveyed no further meaning than a simple denial of the sacramental presence; yet it appeared so shocking to the Catholic prelates, that some of them loudly exclaimed *Blasphemavit*: others rose to be gone, as if fearing to be contaminated in such impious company; and the king, who was present, was requested either to silence Beza, or to dissolve the assembly. On the other hand, the Protestants were always as much scandalized with the idolatrous worship paid to the *breaden God*, as they termed it; and were

as ready to impute blasphemy to the language of priests and monks in extolling the sanctity of a symbol of their own manufacture. For it is to be observed, that the accusation of impiety is equally incurred by both parties in such disputes; and that the derogation to divinity is as flagrant in raising creatures to a level with it, as in attacking its supremacy. Thus the Jewish high-priest exclaimed *Blasphemy!* when Jesus announced himself as the son of God; and many fanatics who have arrogated a participation in the same character have been treated as *blasphemers*. It seems impossible to engage in the Trinitarian controversy without being liable to the charge of impiety. Reasonings, how temperate soever, tending to undeify two persons in the Trinity, must be regarded as blasphemous by those who are firmly persuaded of their title to divine honours; while they who hold as sacred the maxim—

..... Let no inferior nature

Usurp, or share, the throne of its Creator,

cannot avoid considering such a multiplication of the objects of worship as treason against the prerogative of the One Supreme.

A believer in revelation certainly will not admit the axiom of Hobbes, “Superstition is a religion

a religion out of fashion, and religion is a superstition in fashion;" yet in controversial language it seems to be assumed as matter of fact. Who now feels shocked at the ridicule and sarcasm levelled at the Heathen theology by the Christian writers, which must, at the time, have appeared to a majority of those to whom they were addressed blasphemous in the highest degree, and were probably the cause of some of the persecutions that fell upon the Christian church? The Italian who pulled off his hat to a statue of Jupiter, hoping to be remembered for his civility should his godship "come into fashion" again, had a right notion of the chronological and geographical nature of piety and impiety in popular estimation.

My inference from these observations is, that such a weighty charge as that of *blasphemy*, which we always see coupled with the most odious epithets, and represented as the highest of crimes, should not be lightly brought, nor simply upon the ground of a difference of opinion as to the sacredness of particular persons or doctrines. I know not to what South alludes in a sentence quoted in Johnson's Dictionary, where he speaks of a "villanous, impudent and blasphemous assertion;" but he was just that kind  
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of character from whom every licence of vituperative language in controversy might be expected. We have seen that the term is often convertible; and nothing can be idler than to indulge in the use of reproachful terms which an antagonist may with as good authority retort upon ourselves. It would be wisdom for a man not to engage at all in religious disputation, till he has brought his mind into such a state, as to bear with tranquillity any argumentative liberty used by his opponent against what he may himself esteem most sacred. Heat that bursts forth in railing language is not, indeed, a proof of a bad cause, but indicates a weak and injudicious defender of that cause, one who has been little accustomed to the use of fair reasoning, and whose opinions are, with respect to himself, mere prejudices.

IMPIETY is a word of more large and lax signification than blasphemy, denoting disregard to religion in general, whether manifested in words or deeds. In common with the former, it has always been freely applied by sects and parties to stigmatize sentiments and practices derogatory from their own; and poetry and history are filled with applications of the word to marks of indifference or contempt shown to prevalent

prevalent religions, almost always followed, in their representations, by condign punishment. But when the rational theism of a Socrates, and the daring atheism of a Diagoras, are treated with the same appellation, no other inference can be drawn, than that the person using it finds the tenets of both equally adverse to his interests or his prejudices. *Impiety* being a negative term, its proper meaning can only be determined by that of the positive term *piety*. If this be rightly defined by Johnson, "discharge of duty to God," the *duty* must first be submitted to the scrutiny of reason, or the grossest superstition may usurp the regard due to rational religion.

VIII. *On the mixture of words from the learned languages unchanged, with English.*

Writers zealous for the purity of the English tongue have frequently censured that intermixture of French words with which some fashionable authors have interlarded their styles, and which in general is justly regarded as betraying bad taste or affectation. There seems, however, to be equal reason for animadverting upon a similar practice with respect to words  
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in the learned languages. It is common, not only in scientific works, but in those in miscellaneous literature, to meet with Greek and Latin terms, which preserve not only their radical forms, but even their grammatical inflections. As the English language is distinguished by its great simplicity in this respect, nothing can be more glaring than this anomaly, which appears to me one of the greatest deformities of which a style is susceptible. The words to which I allude are such as *phenomenon*, *criterion*, *effluvium*, *genus*, *miasma*, *stamen*, &c. These, even in the singular form, ill assimilate with the general tone or staple of our language; and it is a defect that we do not, like the Italians and French, at once naturalize them by a vernacular termination. In length of time, when such words have come into popular use, this is often done; but, through fear of the charge of singularity and innovation, writers of reputation are backward in taking this liberty, and prefer chequering their diction with a macaronic mixture of words absolutely foreign, notwithstanding the violation of the plainest principles of good taste.

But the effect is infinitely worse when such words are pluralized according to their proper form ;

form ; since nothing can be more alien to the rules of English grammar than the practice of antiquity in this respect. What can be more *un-english* than to form the plurals of the terminations *on, um, us, ma, men, by a, era, ata, ina, &c.* ? I grant that our proper plural *s* gives somewhat of a barbarous sound to the above terminations ; but, to my perception, a cacophony is not half so bad as an incongruity ; and those writers appear to me worthy of praise, who have ventured upon *stamens* instead of *stamina* ; *miasms* instead of *miasmata* ; and *effluvia* instead of *effluvia*. The reason why this accommodation to our own language is not oftener made, is the writer's apprehension lest he should be thought wanting in erudition. Persons classically educated are much disposed to hold the maxim that no one can write English correctly who is unacquainted with the learned languages ; and true it is, if a noun cannot be put into the plural without borrowing the form of Greek or Latin, a knowledge of the grammar of those languages is indispensably necessary to all who use such words. What is this, however, but asserting that our tongue is in an unformed state ; and, indeed, rather a jargon than a language ? for every speech  
that

that mixes words and grammatical forms belonging to different languages, is properly a jargon. It ought, on the contrary, to be a maxim, that every cultivated language is a rule to itself, and has no occasion to refer to the practice of another for direction in the use of any terms that properly belong to it. Their original meaning, indeed, must be sought in the languages whence they are derived; but their actual signification, their syntax and inflections, are determined by the practice of the best writers in the language; and every one well versed in them ought to be deemed fully capable of acquiring the accurate and elegant use of such language. The French, who have perhaps surpassed every modern nation in the attention paid to fixing and cultivating their own tongue, admit this principle. That it is disputed among us is owing to the classical pride or pedantry which are still too prevalent, and which aim at establishing as marked a difference as possible between the learned and the unlearned. Yet it is certain that some of the best writers in our language have been, and are, females, whose education cannot have familiarized them with the forms and constructions of the tongues of antiquity, but whose taste and refinement  
render



render them, when their minds are duly cultivated by the literature accessible to them, excellent judges and proficient in genuine English.

It has been a fashion for some years past to impose compound terms from the Greek upon new inventions, not only of the scientific kind, but for popular use, or mere entertainment. These names have had some reference to the nature of the things, but so lax that no ancient Grecian could have formed a conception of them without a particular explanation. What would an Athenian have made of *Panorama*, *Panopticon*, *Phantasmagoria*, and the like? A modern, who sees them, knows precisely what the words imply; and so he would if the etymology were Chinese. They are therefore mere arbitrary terms; and it is rather misleading, than informing, to indicate the things by compounds which, to the few who can understand them, will more probably suggest false than true conceptions. I can suppose a young lady, writing to her brother at college that she had seen the different *panoramas* in town, triumphantly corrected by telling her that she was ignorant of the meaning and origin of the word, and that she ought to

have written *panoramata*; but I should be unwilling to admit that the Grecian was the better English scholar of the two, or that he had a clearer notion of the nature of a circular landscape.

I shall subjoin a remark respecting orthography. Polite English pronunciation discards all combinations of different vowels, or diphthongs; and the practice of our schools gives no other than the simple sound of *e* to the Latin diphthongs *æ* and *œ*. Why then should they be retained in the spelling of words fairly anglicised? Dr. Middleton, who adopted the etymological principle in orthography, attempted to introduce the *æ* in all words in which it existed in the Latin whence they were derived: thus he wrote *prælate*, *præfix*, *præface*, and the like. In this practice he was consistent; but the deformity to the eye was too glaring to be imitated; and we reserve only enough of the diphthongal spelling to add to the numerous anomalies of our language, and give scope to scholastic impertinence. What purpose does it serve to write *æconomy*, *hæmorrhage*, *phæ-nomenon*, &c. but to mark that the words are not of the old English staple (a piece of information unnecessary to a scholar, and useless to  
one

one who is not); whilst it only misleads in the pronunciation, proper diphthongs being always long, whereas the *e* which we substitute in speaking such words is generally short? When the rest of the word has assumed an English form, it is mere pedantic barbarism to preserve in it a letter not found in our alphabet.

ON  
REASONING FROM ANALOGY.

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As the cases are comparatively rare in which the mathematical or the syllogistical forms of argumentation can be employed on topics of human inquiry, it has become necessary frequently to resort to the mode of *reasoning from analogy*, the essence of which consists in drawing inferences concerning things unknown, from their resemblance to things known. Although such a process is of great use in discussing matters of probability, and is, indeed, often the only method of arguing which we can employ, it is highly important for the reasoner to be aware of its defects and inlets to delusion, which last are so numerous, that it has been the parent of most of the errors under which mankind have laboured. There is in human nature such a propensity to pursue resemblances to a fanciful length, and from slight premises to draw large conclusions, that a keen speculatist can seldom confine himself within the limits of fair inference;

inference; and the greater his ingenuity and inventive powers, the more is he liable to be led astray by illusory notions.

The very narrow foundations upon which extensive analogies have been built cannot but surprise one who studies the history of the human mind without prejudice. Some instances of this kind may be usefully adduced, both as being curious in themselves, and as being calculated to strike a deep and salutary impression of the facility with which the judgment is misguided in pursuing trains of analogical speculation.

Few deceptions have prevailed so generally or lasted so long as that of *judicial astrology*; yet nothing can be more forced and remote than the analogies on which it is founded. After the influences of the great luminaries, the sun and moon, upon this globe, had been ascertained, it was not an improbable supposition that the other heavenly bodies might also exert influences. But as their apparently inferior bulk would obviously reduce any action of a *similar kind* to a mere trifle, men were not satisfied with the *direct* analogy, but fancied a variety of influences totally different from those of the former, which they deduced  
from

from the most shadowy conformities imaginable. The first step in this system of error seems to have been the giving names to the planets. Those of the heathen theology being borrowed for this purpose, analogy transferred the attributes of the deities to the planets which bore their names. For the convenience of astronomers, the whole face of the heavens was then portioned out into figures, comprehending groups of the fixed stars, or constellations, some of which, in their outlines, exhibited a rude resemblance to the object chosen to discriminate them; while, in the greater part, the figure was formed merely by the arbitrary fancy of the designer. Even to these constellations, however, qualities were associated similar to those of the men, animals, utensils, &c. of which the figures were constituted. The most noted of these lay in the zodiac, or sun's path-way in his apparent orbit round the earth; and to these was attributed a superior influence, that of the sun being added to the fancied properties of the constellations.

The task, however, remained of connecting these influences or significations with man and his concerns; and this was the final and most  
curious

curious process of analogy. A planet was supposed to shed its influence peculiarly when in a certain part of the heavens; and the child who happened to come into the world at the instant of such an astral predominancy, was to be indelibly impressed with the qualities belonging to *his star*. Thus dispositions became *jovial, saturnine, martial, mercurial*, and the like; words which from the frequency of their astrological application are adopted into common language. At length the folly proceeded so far, that every event which was to befall a man during his whole life was conceived to be determined by the aspect of the heavens under which he was born; so that, as Butler humorously expresses it,

No sooner does he peep into  
The world, but he has done his do;  
Catch'd all diseases, took all physick  
That cures or kills a man that is sick;  
Married his punctual dose of wives,  
Is cuckolded, and breaks or thrives.

*Hudibr.*

From this persuasion, *casting a nativity* was regarded as the summit of all human science; and for many ages astrologers were retained by kings and great men for the purpose of making predic-

predictions, and, from the position of the heavens, directing the proper time for engaging in all affairs of consequence. So congenial were these follies to the weakness of the human mind, agitated by the vicissitudes of hope and fear, that they were among the latest delusions banished from Europe by the progress of reason and knowledge, and still reign uncontrolled in the East. But though the notions of astrology are now exploded among all persons of sense, yet we are so familiarised with them in our reading, that we are perhaps scarcely sensible of the amazing abuse of analogy which first brought them into credit. What wide steps in reasoning (if the process deserves the name) from the material effects of the sun and moon, to the moral influence of a star! from the supposed qualities of a heathen deity, to similar ones residing in a planet to which chance has affixed the same appellation! and from the place in the hemisphere occupied by that planet, to the exertion of its influence for life upon a child born at a particular instant! Yet with such reasoning men of the best understanding were long satisfied.

Popular religions in all ages have taken their rise from analogy. As soon as men had formed

a con-



a conception of potent beings, the invisible authors of effects which could not be produced by human agents, they clothed these beings in bodily shapes resembling their own, and endowed them with human passions and affections. In conformity with these notions, the means employed to gain their favour or avert their displeasure were analogically founded upon the experience of similar applications to the feelings of earthly superiors. Lowly prostrations, addresses in the most studied terms of praise and adoration, altars on which imaginary offerings were made to them of whatever themselves held most precious \*, even to the sacrifice of their own children, the erection of magnificent edifices for their expected residence, the consecration of a select body of men to their service—were modes of doing them honour and rendering them propitious, evidently copied from the manifestations of reverence and attachment paid to chiefs and kings. So implicitly were these ideas received, that persons engaged in opposite interests contended with each other for the favour of the gods by such bribery as they would have employed towards

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\* Πεπλον, ὅς οἱ δοκεῖ χαριέστατος ἢ δὲ μεγίστος.

Il. vi. 90.

human

human potentates ; and, careless of the justice of their cause, placed their reliance upon the tempting offers of a share in the pillage which success would enable them to make good. History is filled with accounts of these monstrous profanations of religion, which afforded ample scope for the sarcasms of Lucian and other freethinkers in the days of heathenism. Even the purity of Christian theology has been largely contaminated with similar follies and impieties ; and catholic sovereigns have not been less profuse of costly bargains for the protection of favourite saints in their emergencies, than the most superstitious of the believers in pagan mythology.

The same analogy between things human and divine has, in almost all religions, either suggested the idea of deities of opposite characters, beneficent and malignant, the respective authors of the goods and evils of which mankind partake ; or has represented the same beings as the distributors of both, according as they have been actuated on different occasions by the motives which influence men in like cases. Savage nations usually have recourse to evil spirits or demons to account for the diseases and other calamities under which they suffer ;  
whereas

whereas the Grecian mythology attributed them to the same deities, offended by neglect or contumely, who, when soothed and pleased, were kind and beneficent. The gods in Homer are partisans or enemies of Greece or Troy, upon just the same grounds of favour or resentment as the human chiefs attached to each party; and indeed their moral portraitures are so little distinguished from those of mere mortals, that the philosophers of other ages, when they began to reason upon theological topics, were greatly shocked with the degradation. The epic poets, his imitators, in much more enlightened times persisted in forming their machinery upon similar passions and affections of the deities who were actors in their fable; and war and mischief were deliberated upon in the cabinet of Olympus just as they would have been in the privy-councils of terrestrial monarchs.

Errors in science have almost universally been the offspring of false or imperfect analogies; and it is curious to observe how a single term, used by way of illustration, has engendered an entire theory with all its appendages. Thus the *nerves* have been called, as they really are in appearance, *strings*; but strings  
are

are capable of different degrees of *tension*, and according to these *vibrate* with greater or less force. Hence the nervous system was said to be *braced* or *relaxed*; its functions depended upon its *tone*; the sympathies of one nerve with another were owing to similarity of tension, as had been remarked with respect to fiddle-strings; nerves communicated their vibrations to the brain, and excited in that organ tremulous motions which were the immediate cause of sensation; and so forth. It is a pity that all this ingenious and well-connected system is overthrown by the simple fact, that the nerves always lie unstretched in a soft bed of cellular substance, to which they are attached by innumerable minute threads, so as to be utterly incapable of any motion like the vibrating of a cord.

For the purposes of quackery and imposture a single word sometimes produces an admirable effect, by engaging the imagination in a kind of obscure analogy, where no precise or consistent theory could be supported. This was remarkably the case with respect to what was called *animal magnetism*. Real magnetism was well known as a power in nature characterized by its effect, though its cause remained a secret.

cret. A certain invisible influence proceeding from the magnet exercised a visible operation upon the iron approaching it. By applying the term *magnetism* to the animal body, it was not intended to maintain that the same principle existed there; but advantage was taken of the idea the word excited, to insinuate that actions equally mysterious and unaccountable might result from some peculiar mode of operating upon one living subject by another. To this suggestion was annexed the doctrine of *sympathy*, in which mental and corporeal actions are strangely blended, and some undoubted fact has served as the basis of much fiction. As it is indisputable that the image of an absent person acts upon the mind of another, through the medium of memory, and that the feelings and sentiments of that person may be communicated sympathetically to his friend by letter or message; so it was assumed that the bodily operations, or *treatments*, could be made to exert a required influence at an indefinite distance. This notion nearly resembled that of the cure of wounds by sympathy, so seriously patronized by that extraordinary person Sir Kenelm Digby, who, however, maintained his system more philosophically,

phically, by a subtle application of the doctrines of effluvia, and of the mutual attraction of similar particles. All these mystical theories and fraudulent pretensions claim the support of one analogical argument:—as you are obliged to admit for matter of fact several things the causes of which you are unable to comprehend, so you must not reject what we affirm upon the ground of its incomprehensibility. The argument to a certain extent is a good one ; but does not exclude a just suspicion of wonders attempted to be rendered credible by weak and sophistical reasoning.

Medical theories have been little more than a succession of false or overstrained analogies. At one time chemical ideas gave the vogue, and then, every operation in the animal body, sound or diseased, was ascribed to ferments, neutralizations, volatilizations, condensations, and other processes carried on in the laboratory. Afterwards, mathematical and mechanical principles took the lead ; and the size and weight of particles, their free motion or obstruction, the density or rarity, visciduity or tenuity of fluids, the impelling and resisting powers, the contractility and elasticity of fibres, and the like, were applied to explain the whole

whole animal economy. In later times, the living principle was taken into the account, and the human body became a self-moved electrical machine, subject to excitement, exhaustion, overcharge, inertness, &c. Thus each set of theorists have had a favourite analogy, to which they have accommodated their language and reasonings, often to the total disregard of other considerations.

A remarkable example of extravagance in analogical reasoning is afforded by Mr. Burke's Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful, where he attempts to shew that it is the essence of the *beautiful* to produce "an agreeable relaxation of the fibres." To illustrate this, he observes, "that *smooth* things are relaxing; that *sweet* things, which are the *smooth* of taste, are relaxing too; and that *sweet smells*, which bear a great affinity to *sweet tastes*, relax very remarkably." He further remarks, that "we often apply the quality of *sweetness* metaphorically to *visual* objects;" and he proposes "for the better carrying on this remarkable analogy of the senses, to call sweetness *the beautiful of taste*." Professor Dugald Stewart, in his "Philosophical Essays," has made some very just observations

tions on the abuse of analogy in this celebrated essay.

Even men of the world and politicians have sometimes suffered themselves to be misled by analogical reasonings in opposition to the dictates of plain sense and experience. In the contest which terminated with the independence of the American colonies, many will remember how much stress was laid in argument upon the natural authority of a *mother-country* over her *daughters*, and the obligation of the latter to attend to the wants of the good old parent, and to submit to a subserviency to her interests. This analogy, however, was not understood on the other side of the Atlantic; and we know the result of the mother's attempt to whip her children into obedience.

From the preceding examples of the abuse of analogy may be deduced the principal cautions requisite in applying it to purposes of argumentation.

In the first place, it should be founded upon a real, not a nominal, resemblance. Various instances have been cited to shew how a single word used with laxity has formed the basis of a delusive analogy. These might be multiplied



ed from the effects of that metaphorical application of terms literally belonging to corporeal objects, to mind and its qualities, which have obtained in all languages. Thus, the word employed to denote the *immaterial* part of the human compound has always been that by which some kind of *subtle matter*, such as air, vapour, breath, is primarily denoted. But however this may seem to the imagination divested of the properties of *gross matter*, it remains, in effect, as remote from the philosophical notion of *spirit*, (as far as the latter is characterized by a negation of all material properties,) as gold or marble. Yet the popular ideas of soul in its existence when separated from the body have in all countries been derived from this false and merely verbal analogy between spirit and matter of great tenuity; whence have sprung all the fancied forms of ghosts and spectres, souls clad in vestments of air or light, which were objects to the sight and hearing, though impalpable to the touch. To the same head may be referred the errors arising from the use of symbols, the practical consequences of which have frequently been very injurious to rational religion and morality. Thus, crime being metaphorically the stain and

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pollution

pollution of the soul, and innocence its whiteness and purity, the emblem of washing was employed to denote purgation from mental vitiations. But the emblem soon began to be regarded as the thing itself. Ovid in his *Fasti*, mentioning the annual lustrations practised in Rome, takes notice of the abuse of attributing to the washing itself the property of cleansing from all past delinquencies; which error he derives from ancient Greece: and after giving some instances of this mode of expiating homicide, he rationally exclaims,

Ah nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis

Fluminea tolli posse putatis aqua!

Too simple souls, who think the guilt of blood

Can leave its tincture in the river's flood!

Whether Constantine's reservation of his baptism till he should have come to a close of his life and crimes was a relic of heathen superstition, or a sentiment of corrupted christianity, ecclesiastical historians may decide; but it is too certain that false notions concerning the efficacy of baptism were early, and still are, among the prominent errors of christendom. The Jews and Mahometans have made a religious duty of the corporeal ablution, and have thus taken the type for the thing typified.

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Physiognomical conclusions may in great part be attributed to mere verbal analogies between the properties of mind and those of body. Thus the *expanded* brow is supposed to designate an *open* temper; the *dark overhanging* forehead, a *gloomy* and *reserved* one: *sharp* features, to imply an *acute* understanding, or a *keen* disposition; *thick fleshy* ones, a *gross* intellect or *obtuse* feelings: a *high* nose, to indicate *haughtiness*; a *prolonged* one, *long-suffering* or *patience*, &c. Of kindred origin is the hypothesis that *sublimity* of genius is the product of a *mountainous* or *elevated* country; and that *flatness* characterizes the native of the *plain*. In all these cases it appears that men have been misled by words, and that the poverty of language in expressing intellectual ideas, by terms borrowed from sensible objects, has suggested resemblances which have no real existence.

Secondly, analogical reasonings should be carried to their full and fair extent. General similarity, if it infer one thing, infers more; and we must not select certain points of resemblance, and reject others, merely because it suits the purpose of our argument. Similarity, it is true, is not identity; but if, from one known point of resemblance, we venture

to infer another unknown, there is just the same reason for proceeding in the parallel to the remaining points. Thus, astronomers having discovered that the planets have the same relation to the sun that our earth has, following the same law of moving round that luminary as their centre, and turning meanwhile upon their own axis, a reasonable foundation is laid for the conclusion that they also are inhabited by living creatures. If, however, this be a just analogical deduction, it ought likewise to regulate our conceptions concerning the nature and condition of those creatures. We need not, indeed, suppose them to be men, dogs, or horses ; nor that their modes of sensation, nutrition, propagation, and the like, are identical with those which we find established in our world—for the production of variety is even here an obvious intention of nature, and new sources of it are continually opened to the observer :—but in attributing to them *life*, we cannot consequentially separate from it those circumstances with which life, in all the forms in which we have surveyed it, is invariably accompanied ; namely, origin, progress, maturity, decay, and death ; pleasure and pain ; health and disease. And as in this world we  
universally

universally behold good and evil, advantage and disadvantage, mutually acting as cause and effect, and combining in every disposition of things, natural and moral; so analogy obliges us to conclude that the same mixture prevails more or less in the systems established in resembling worlds.

The striking corporeal conformities between man and other animals have been minutely pointed out by some philosophers, who have yet been led by the force of pre-conceived hypotheses to violate analogy, by refusing to admit that the latter possess mental faculties at all similar to those of the former. Thus Descartes pertinaciously maintained that brutes are mere machines or automatons; and that what *appears* in them to be memory, choice, contrivance, attachment, and the like, is not the result of a part in their composition resembling a human soul, but of mere mechanism. But surely if, in comparing the structure of the eye in a man and a dog, I find a perfect similarity of organ, and thence infer that the dog sees in the same manner as the man does; I ought to conclude, that when he comprehends his master's signs, when he fawns upon him, guards him, and protects his property, he undergoes

dergoes internal impressions similar to those of a human being in like circumstances. And, indeed, the argument from analogy, if uncontradicted by something more positive, would extend much further, and warrant conclusions of similarity with respect to the future destiny of our fellow-animals.

Thirdly, analogy is not to be followed when opposed by actual observation. This rule operates as a check upon the former; for though analogy cannot limit itself, it ought to submit to the control of a more direct and positive species of argumentation. When two things apparently resembling are proved by examination or experiment to be in some points essentially different, the chain of analogy is broken, and all deductions from it respecting the remaining points are rendered so uncertain, that a sober reasoner will scarcely place much confidence in them. Thus, there are striking similarities between the animal and vegetable classes of creation. The subjects of both proceed through various stages to maturity, decay, and death or loss of organization, and renew themselves in their progeny. But there are also striking points of dissimilarity, such as the circumstances attending nutrition, motion, sensation

tion or obedience to stimuli, and distinction of parts. Whilst, therefore, there is sufficient ground from analogy to infer a resemblance in the structure of these two classes of beings as far as they are possessed of common properties, there is equal reason to conclude a dissimilarity of organization as far as their properties differ. Yet a late ingenious theorist was so much governed by analogy, as to attribute heart, brain and nerves to vegetables, as confidently as to animals.

There is nothing, indeed, in which men of fancy and ingenuity are so apt to run to excess as in hunting an analogy. It is curious to remark how Linnæus, in his sexual system of vegetables, has sported with his imagination in framing parallels between the connubial and domestic state among men, and the several dispositions of the stamens and pistils in plants; so that, instead of a set of simple facts, serving as a natural basis to his system, he has exhibited a kind of analogical theory, which, perhaps, he did not originally mean to propose as real, but which, I think, has manifestly influenced his arrangement. But the poetical philosopher, who has so delightfully described the *loves of the plants*, has carried these ideas  
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much further; for he has not only fully received what Linnæus with some caution suggested—the presence of sensation in vegetable impregnations; but has bestowed individual existence, feeling, and even passion, upon the several sexual parts of flowers; and has thus (if he is to be understood literally) converted these amorous fictions into realities. (See *Botanic Garden*, Note 39 to Part I.)

It ought never to be forgotten that analogy, though frequently the sole applicable mode of argumentation, is always much short of real proof, and never carries the weight of experiment and observation. Very often indeed, it is no more than the sport of a lively imagination led away by a happy simile or a slight conformity, and preferring the indolent amusement of system-building to the slow and toilsome task of experimental investigation. Its chief use is to suggest objects and modes of research; and in this way the analogical *guesses* of ingenious men have sometimes proved important, and have been verified in the event. A remarkable example of this kind was the conjecture of Newton concerning the inflammable nature of the diamond, derived from the analogy of its action on the rays of light.

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But it was the privilege of that great man to discern almost intuitively truths which cost others a laborious process to establish. He, however, never trusted to any thing but mathematical demonstration, or experimental proof; and his caution and modesty offer an instructive example to other inquirers, many of whom surpass him in confidence and precipitation, in almost as great a degree as they fall beneath him in genius.

NO  
DUEL LING.

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THERE are evils in society to which we are so much familiarized that we are apt to lose the sense of their being evils, or, at least, to imagine that they are so interwoven with the texture of social life, that they cannot be removed without greater mischief. Such an acquiescence, however, is more commonly the result of indolence, or an idle dread of innovation, than of true wisdom; for there cannot be a more unequivocal call to exertion than that arising from the pressure of existing evils; and experience has shown that many of those which attend the ruder states of society may be corrected by the due application of progressive reason and knowledge.

The practice of duelling seems at present, in common opinion, to stand in the predicament of those maladies to which it is advisable quietly to submit. A case of peculiar calamity or atrocity, sometimes, indeed, rouses the public

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lic compassion or indignation ; but these emotions presently subside in the vague idea that the custom is too inveterate to be eradicated, and that it may have its advantages as well as its inconveniences. But, surely, when we have seen many of the most valuable lives in the nation put to hazard by this mode of settling punctilios of honour—when we are perpetually reading of persons engaged in the service of their country perishing in these unpatriotic combats—when even the commerce of private life is rendered insecure by this barbarism—when we further observe the cruel dilemma in which trials originating from this cause involve judges and juries, from which they can hardly extricate themselves without violating their public duties or distressing their private feelings—we cannot deliberately regard duelling as an evil to be acquiesced in without an attempt for its removal.

In reasoning upon this topic, I shall not usurp the pulpit's office in demonstrating the obvious truth of the inconsistency of private revenge with the injunctions of Christianity. Speaking to the world as a man of the world, it would be a cant or a mockery to appeal to a law, which, while its authority is acknowledged  
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in words, is no more in fact regarded as a rule of conduct than if it had been promulgated in another planet. I shall therefore consider the matter simply upon the ground of common sense and common interest.

To speak of the *absurdity* of duelling, may appear as superfluous as to prove its immorality, to any one who for a moment attends to the occasions on which it is usually practised. If it be to revenge an injury, what can be more irrational than for the injured to expose himself to the same hazard with the injurer—often, indeed, to a greater, considering who the persons are from whom private injuries and insults in society are most to be expected! Revenge naturally points to the stiletto: and if sentiments of honour forbid its use, the sword or pistol in open fight can never be its substitute. As little can a duel bring to decision any imputation that has been thrown upon character with respect to veracity, honour, or integrity. A shot or a thrust has not the least bearing upon such a case, in which public opinion, guided by fact, is the only umpire. Nothing could set this in a stronger light than a late duel between two persons high in political station. The subject was an insidious intrigue

intrigue by which one was accused of attempting to subvert the power of the other. The documents were laid before the public, which was thus constituted judge of the justice of the charge; and its censure was the expected punishment of the offender. To the determination of this point, exchanging a shot between the parties had no reference whatever. One of the two, whether wounded or unhurt, was still an object of blame; and they came from the field to the bar of public opinion just as they went out. When a gentleman is charged with uttering a wilful falsehood, he justly feels the imputation as highly derogatory to his honour; but how shall he repel it? If the charge be well-grounded, in vain shall he shoot his accuser through the head; for every one knows that a fighting man may be one very lax in his assertions. The thing is a matter of proof, and by that, his reputation for veracity must stand or fall. The same may be said with respect to charges of cheating at cards, or other instances of dishonourable conduct. Not a particle of the disgrace is wiped away by a duel with the person who brings the accusation, if facts are strong in its support. Again, warm expressions are used in a parliamentary debate;

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one speaker imputing to another improper motives for the part he has taken. The offended person thinks it incumbent on him as a gentleman to *call out* his antagonist; but in the mean time the public passes its judgement on the validity of the imputation, from a view of the respective characters of the parties, and regards the issue of the combat only with the simple curiosity it would bestow on a boxing-match.

The consequences above pointed out are so obvious, that very few duels probably are fought with the real purpose either of revenging an injury, or of refuting an imputation; and it may be taken for granted that they would gladly be avoided, could any other way be found of satisfying the arbitrary and indefinite laws of honour. A remarkable proof of this assertion is afforded by the modern, or rather the English, mode (for I believe it is limited to this country) of seeking redress for what has been usually regarded as the most sensible injury a gentleman could receive, and one not to be expiated but by the blood of the offender—seduction of the partner of his bed. Men of the nicest honour among us are now contented with seeking a reparation for this cruel wrong by a legal

legal action for pecuniary damages ; and hostilities are confined to the bloodless contests of Westminster-hall. But if a case of honour so delicate as this can be brought under the decision of law and reason, what other can be imagined which might not, by the aid of public opinion, be made to submit to the same arbiters ? The notion that social intercourse among equals could not be maintained in proper decorum without the check of personal chastisement for rudeness or violence, is an insult to the boasted politeness of modern times. The polished nations of antiquity were entirely unacquainted with this pretended support of good manners, which owed its introduction to a relapse to barbarism, and can only be necessary upon the supposition of an hereditary taint of the same barbarism still infecting the descendants of the subverters of the Roman empire. In fact, the custom of duelling has a peculiar tendency to provoke and instigate these breaches of civility, which it is alleged to prevent ; for, a readiness to give and accept challenges being regarded as a test of courage, they who are ambitious of a reputation for that quality are induced to make occasions, by their behaviour, for the appeal to arms.

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The obligation to demand or grant the *satisfaction* (as it is termed) of single combat, which is now attached to the character of a gentleman, is founded on the maxim that courage is the quality most of all indispensable to that rank in society; and that life, with all its duties and enjoyments, is not to be placed in balance with the reputation of possessing it. But this is a position which few, I presume, would seriously maintain. That life, indeed, is freely to be hazarded, and even sacrificed, on certain occasions, is a tenet of moral philosophy as well as of the worldly school of honour; but neither philosophy nor true honour will regard the maintaining a mere reputation for courage as one of those occasions. The reputation, too, thus supported, is a very equivocal one; for neither is the man who, urged by the dread of disgrace, reluctantly stands a shot, proved to be brave; nor he who declines the invitation from motives of duty and good-sense, proved a coward. The first might shrink from trials which the second would pass through with credit. True courage is not evinced by a single act of rashness or desperation: it is a settled temper of the mind, governing all the conduct of life, and not less conspicuous on ordinary



dinary than extraordinary occasions; in the chamber than in the throng; in the senate than in the field. So far from excluding, it requires, a calm and rational comparison of good and evil upon every call for encountering pain or danger. Who would not pronounce it egregious folly to undergo amputation of a leg for a kided heel; and is it less to sport with life itself upon a punctilio? It is impossible that such a consideration should not press itself upon every one who, under no influence of passion, but merely in obedience to the imperious command of opinion, goes out with the purpose of putting his own and another's existence to the chance of a bullet; and we may be well assured that when he has such ties to life as family, friends, fortune, and important duties public or private, he must severely feel the enormity of the action he is about to engage in. Surely, then, a tyranny of opinion at which all the best sentiments of human nature revolt, might be subverted by a bold and manly appeal to the reason of the public. Were two or three examples to occur of persons in distinguished stations, and of tried firmness of mind, who, upon being challenged for a slight or imaginary affront,

should say, "I think my life of too much value to be hazarded on such an occasion. If I have done you wrong in the judgement of an impartial umpire, I am ready to redress it; but I shall not retract what upon just grounds I have said or done"—I cannot doubt that such conduct would be countenanced by the approbation of all whose esteem was worth preserving, and that it would be imitated.

It is a remarkable fact, that the army alone, in which the character for courage can admit of no questioning, should have established certain rules within itself limiting the obligation of accepting a challenge. These, I believe, chiefly turn upon circumstances of military rank and command; but the same professional authority and concurrence which could enforce rules in some cases, might extend them to others. There is one case to which it is highly desirable that the restriction should be extended; and indeed the country has a right to demand that it should be so: this is, the case of officers upon actual service. It is difficult to determine whether pity or indignation should preponderate when we read the frequent accounts of young men, in consequence of some frivolous quarrel, throwing away lives engaged

gaged to their king and country, when just on the eve of setting sail on some important expedition in which they have an assigned post. Such an act can be regarded as nothing less than desertion—a desertion the more criminal, as, besides the loss of life, it involves the flight of the survivor and all concerned in the duel. It would be becoming the gentlemen of the army to declare their sense of this perversion of the principle of honour, by a resolution to hold as infamous, and unworthy of the name of soldier, the officer, who, under these circumstances, gives or accepts a challenge. Strictly considered, no men have their lives so little at their own disposal as they who have engaged in the military service. As they are bound, at the command of a superior, to encounter any degree of danger, or even certain death; so they are restricted from exposing themselves to rash and useless hazards, and especially from such as risk other lives with their own. In this light, doubtless, the practice of duelling was regarded by the heroic Gustavus Adolphus, when, in order to abolish it among his officers, at a period when its frequency was a very serious evil, he decreed that the combatants should fight till one fell, and that the survivor should

be hung on the spot. This was the mode employed by sovereign authority to put an end to duels. No one would propose its adoption in a country like this ; but the mention of it may naturally lead to the consideration of two powers which might be resorted to—the influence of the court, and the interposition of law.

That the discountenance of royalty, steadily and impartially exercised towards duellists, might produce a considerable effect upon those who are candidates for its honours and favours, can scarcely be doubted ; but experience has proved that the general influence of a court upon the manners of a nation is much less than might be expected ; and that even in absolute monarchies, national habits and opinions are little under the control of the individual sovereign. Honour and conscience, especially, are things that spurn the injunctions of authority ; and false notions grounded upon them are to be corrected only by juster notions with the same foundation. If the public opinion make it disgraceful in certain circumstances not to give, or to refuse, a challenge, the countenance of royalty itself cannot shelter from its consequences. It is little, even to a courtier, to be smiled upon by his king, if he is despised and shunned by his equals.

With respect to the operation of laws, there is reason to believe that very severe statutes, invariably carried into execution, would check, if not extinguish, the custom of duelling; for although that high regard for the reputation of courage which urges a person to confront the dangers of a combat, might be supposed also to lead him to defy the hazards of a criminal prosecution, yet the terrors of an ignominious death would in most cases prove more powerful than false heroism of sentiment. But in civilized countries, and perhaps peculiarly in this, it would be impossible to carry such rigour into practice. Our laws, indeed, already virtually affix the denomination of murder to the privation of life in duels; for no exception is made in their favour, and it cannot be doubted that such a premeditated act comes under the legal definition of that crime. It is usually so returned by the coroner's inquest; and when a trial is the result, although the judge takes care to inform the jury that the laws of honour are not the laws of the land, and that killing by purpose aforethought is essentially murder, yet some subterfuge is generally suggested by which the jurymen are induced to satisfy their consciences by a milder award. In the present  
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state of opinion it would, indeed, be hard to punish to the extreme an offence against society of which society itself is the cause, and which, in many cases, is the consequence of a cruel necessity that makes the perpetrator an object of pity rather than of blame. Yet I cannot but consider it as a great additional evil of the custom of duelling, that it brings the administrators of justice into a dilemma which tempts them to violate their plain and bounden duty. The institution of juries is the most sacred thing in the English constitution; and accustoming jurymen to tamper with their oaths, and set aside the direct meaning of words for strained and sophistical glosses, is striking at the root of their credit and utility. Much better would it be, as the law now stands, to let it take its course, softened in its execution by that exercise of mercy which the constitution has made the peculiar prerogative of royalty. If the frequency of applications should prove onerous and perplexing to the sovereign, it would be a means of exciting due attention to the subject in those who have it most in their power to effect a change in public opinion.

From such a change alone can be expected the abrogation of a practice which an errone-

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ous way of thinking alone has introduced. The laws of fictitious honour can be altered or repealed only by that part of society which is the legislature of honour. It has always in its own hands the power of enforcing such rules as are necessary for the preservation of order and decorum. What it determines to countenance no individual can render discreditable; and surely nothing is better worthy its interference, than to restrain outrages which carry mourning into the bosom of families, and replunge civil society into a state of barbarism.

ON  
THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS  
IN  
ENGLAND.

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THERE is no subject that more justly interests a lover of liberty and his country than *the freedom of the press*, or the licence of publishing without control such facts and opinions as are important to the welfare of individuals and the community. Long experience has shown that there is no other way, short of actual force, of counteracting the machinations of fraud, and the usurpations of power, than by an open appeal to the sense and reason of mankind, fully informed of all the attending circumstances; and this appeal can be effectually made to a numerous society only by that admirable engine, the press. On this account, while the friends of truth and liberty have always been most solicitous to promote and guard the free communication of intelligence by printing; tyrants and impostors of every species



species have regarded it with horror and detestation, and have used all their power to effect its abolition. As the present period of the world is peculiarly the reign of force, it is not to be wondered at, that the suppression of every thing like free government on the continent of Europe has been accompanied with such a restraint upon publication by the press that its use in informing men on some of the most important topics is almost entirely done away. One only country remains on this side the Atlantic in which—a proud distinction!—former rights continue inviolate, and form an inseparable part of the civil constitution. What these are, and how they can best be preserved, is an inquiry than which none can be more interesting to Britons.

In considering the legal ground of the liberty of the press, we naturally turn to the eminent commentator of the laws of England, and are gratified by his declaration that “Every free-man has an undoubted right to lay what sentiments he pleases before the public.” This appears to be as liberal an allowance as the most zealous advocate for a free press could desire; but we find the writer immediately subjoining, “If he publishes what is improper, mischievous,

mischievous, or illegal, he must take the consequence of his own temerity." *Blackstone's Comm. Book iv. Ch. 11.* We seem now to have lost all we had before gained; for what is a *right* for the exercise of which a man is liable to be punished? And from the commentator's explanation of his meaning we soon discover that it implies no more, than that there exists no law in this country against the mere act of publishing a book, or writing without previous licence, and that its nature and effects alone are the objects of legal inquiry. "The will of individuals (says he) is left free; the abuse only of the free-will is the object of legal punishment." In the same sense a man might be told, You have a right to walk at pleasure; your legs are not fettered: but take notice, that you may be prosecuted for a trespass in whatever field you set your foot. That the learned Justice had either no clear or no enlarged ideas on the subject, appears from his sliding to the "freedom of thought or inquiry, and the liberty of private sentiment," which, he obligingly informs us, are left unrestrained; and also from his quotation from "a fine writer" that "a man may be allowed to keep poisons in his closet, but not publicly to vend them

them as cordials ;” notions suited rather to an opponent, than an advocate, of the liberty of the press.

Confined, however, as this legal liberty may seem to be, much, in fact, is gained by superseding the necessity of submitting works to a censor before publication. Such censors being always appointed by the ruling powers, it is evident that by their means all discussions which appear dangerous to established doctrines and institutions will be strangled in the birth, and never suffered to meet the public eye. With us, though the personal danger to the writer is augmented, his work may have attained its object before the hand of power has interfered for its suppression. Moreover, a censor would secretly *suppress* many things which a public accuser would not choose to *prosecute*. Of this we have sufficient proof in the only instance of licensing practised here, that of pieces for the stage. What trifling objections have been made by courtly lord-chamberlains against passages in plays which would have passed unnoticed in a pamphlet or a newspaper ! Further, where the decision is committed to juries, conviction depends greatly upon the *spirit of the times*. If that be favourable

able to free inquiry, in vain shall an officer of the crown declaim on the wicked and dangerous designs of the author. The juror, bound by no determinate rules of judging, may view the matter in a totally different light, and may applaud, as an useful employment of reason and argument, the discussion which a delegate of authority may regard as criminal presumption.

On the supposition, therefore, that the public welfare requires a control of some kind over the liberty of publishing private opinions upon all sorts of topics in which the good of society is concerned, (a position which it is not my present intention either to maintain or controvert), it may be admitted that a responsibility for such works after their appearance, imposed upon those who were concerned in the publication, is the least objectionable mode of effecting that control. Let us, then, next inquire in what manner productions of a suspected tendency ought to be brought to the bar of the country, in order to undergo the ordeal which is to affix on them the stamp of guilt or innocence, and to exculpate or punish those on whom the responsibility properly rests.

In the act of issuing a new work from the press, three persons are sharers; the author, the printer, and the publisher. Of these, the author is he who has obviously the first place either of merit or delinquency, since it is originally the product of his own mind, and he cannot be ignorant of its nature and purpose, or unconscious of the intention with which it was laid before the public. He, therefore, seems to be the person on whom the cognizance of the law should primarily attach, when it is determined to institute a prosecution for an obnoxious writing. The publisher, however, who has consented to stand in a peculiar relation to the work, and to be the source of its dispersion, may reasonably be supposed to have previously informed himself of its character and tendency, and thereby to have made himself responsible for its contents. If he has not done so, it is a culpable negligence in the conduct of his business. With respect to the printer, as he is properly only an artist pursuing a regular occupation in the employ of others, it would be unjust to require him to exercise a critical judgment on the works sent to him to be transferred from manuscript to types, and he ought to be laid under no other obligation

obligation (at least in common cases) than that of making known his employer.

Here then, it would appear, that the first fixed point should be established; and that the prosecutor of a libel should be obliged to call upon the *author* and *publisher*, when known and producible persons, exclusively of either the printer, or the common vender, who has only issued from his shop an article that has come to him in the ordinary way of sale, and which, in general, he cannot be expected to have accurately examined. That, indeed, there should be a power of stopping it in his hands, and preventing him by the fear of *future* responsibility from contributing to its further circulation, is essential to that end of public good which is the foundation of the whole process; but why should a power exist of inflicting more evil than the case demands; and of rendering that vindictive, which ought only to be remedial? But a little consideration will show that the matter is not so clear as on a cursory view it might seem to be. That advanced state of society to which we owe our refinements in civilization has in this, as in innumerable other instances, suggested the practice of so many tricks and evasions, that the  
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real culprit might escape, while the thunders of the law were spending themselves upon imaginary or impassive beings. An author may be one of Curl's garreteers, composing in a cock-loft, whence his landlord has taken away the ladder of communication in order to secure his weekly rent. The publisher may be an inmate of Newgate or the Rules, defended by poverty against fines, and by want of shame against the pillory ; and both these gentlemen may be set to work by the snug reputable housekeeper. I believe, therefore, that the honourable part of the profession, aware of the existence of such practices among the dishonourable, are ready to acquiesce in the general responsibility of booksellers for all the works which pass through their hands in their way to the public. The consequences of this legal principle they know to be highly serious ; but they trust to the good sense and justice of their countrymen to render them as little mischievous as possible. The matter is so important to the preservation of any thing like freedom of the press, that it well deserves to be fully opened, and placed in the clearest light.

The power of selecting at pleasure the victims of a prosecution for libel may be abused  
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by government so as to become an engine of the most grievous oppression, and even to render the whole business of publishing so insecure as to reduce it to mere connivance. Let us suppose a work of dubious character, but upon a popular topic, and possessing considerable literary merit, to be sent abroad with its author's name. Cautious booksellers, for a time, refuse to admit it into their shops; but observing that weeks and months elapse without any notice of it from the attorney-general—that it is honoured with replies by writers attached to, or employed by, the government—that it is warmly censured, indeed, but read and quoted, perhaps in the great senate of the nation—they begin to suppose that it is regarded by persons in power as within the limits of free discussion; and yielding at length to the importunity of their customers, procure copies of it for common sale. Meantime the crown-officers keep their eyes open: the law winks, but does not sleep: and obnoxious persons are closely watched till they are fairly got within the net. Then, on a sudden, come informations, indictments, prosecutions, and all the machinery of legal warfare; and while the whole body of booksellers are within reach of the



the battery, it is directed against those only whom vengeance, not particular delinquency, points out as objects of attack. I have here put a hypothetical case, yet how nearly was it realized in the publication of the celebrated "Rights of Man!" I wish not to exaggerate; but I believe it may be affirmed that this work was allowed an unchecked circulation during a period little short of two years. Within that space of time it was printed in all sorts of forms, dispersed by all methods, openly sold in almost all shops, answered and commented upon by the periodical and many other writers; so that, at last, when it was condemned as a state libel, there were few booksellers in the island who had not incurred the hazard of being proceeded against as sharers in the act of publication; and indeed, few private persons among the free speculators on political topics who had not participated in the crime of dispersion, by lending, recommending, or some other overt act. For, it is to be observed, the laws of England are as rigorous as those of any country whatever in extending the guilt of libellous publication to all who in any manner contribute to give them circulation; and they make none of those distinctions of degrees in the agency which a moral

consideration would suggest. We have seen a later instance of the condemnation of a pamphlet as a libel, in which a much greater penalty was imposed upon a casual vender than upon the avowed publisher, for no other apparent reason, than that the former had been a noted publisher of other works of a character displeasing to persons in power, though not such as they chose to bring before the bar of the public.

While so many legal dangers surround the liberty of the press, what are its bulwarks? It has but one—A JURY. This sacred institution, the only safe defence, perhaps, that human wisdom can devise against tyranny and oppression, is expressly calculated to limit that *summum jus* which is often *summa injuria*. It is impossible to doubt, especially since a late determination of the highest legislative authority\*, that a jury has a right, in matter of libel,

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\* The Act of Parliament alluded to passed in consequence of a motion of Mr. Fox, seconded by Mr. Erskine. In that statute are the following words: "Be it therefore enacted, &c., That on every such trial, (viz. for the making or publishing any libel) the Jury sworn to try the issue may give a general verdict of Guilty or Not Guilty upon the whole matter put to issue on such indictment or information; and shall not be required or directed by the Court or Judge before whom

to take upon itself the consideration of the whole case, and make *intention* the interpreter of *fact*. The Attorney-general shall bring a man before his country, charging him in as gross terms as he pleases with being a wicked and seditious person, because he has sold a copy of a work deemed to be a libel. He shall prove his facts; and, with all the eloquence of real or affected zeal for the public welfare, demand his victim. "No! (the jury may say)—the man you have chosen to bring to the bar is not the real culprit—he has no *culpable intention* about him to render him a proper subject for the severity of the law. What he did was through mere inadvertence—indeed, it was a necessary consequence of the exercise of his profession. We find him **NOT GUILTY.**"

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whom such indictment or information shall be tried, to find the Defendant or Defendants guilty, merely on the proof of the publication by such Defendant or Defendants of the paper charged to be a libel, and of the sense ascribed to the same in such indictment or information."

Precious words! after the perusal of which, every juror who concurs in the condemnation of a writer or publisher, because the prosecutor or judge entitles a work a wicked and seditious libel, uttered with a criminal intention, when he himself is of opinion that it merits no such character, is guilty of a base violation of his duty.

I have dwelt more on the case of publishers and booksellers than of authors, because, in the modern way of doing business by wholesale, it seems to have been thought that heartily frightening one person of note in these classes might render abortive the schemes of a score of adventurous authors, who would in vain write, if their works were refused circulation. But it is further to be considered, that juries alone can protect the most meritorious writer who dares to animadvert upon the measures of men in power, from consequences which the rigour of the law may carry to absolute ruin. Such is, perhaps necessarily, the laxity of definition applied to libellous publications, that a political writer in opposition to the existing administration scarcely knows when he is safe; and were juries as much disposed to find libels, as rulers frequently are to denominate them, all freedom of discussion on public points would soon be at an end. The penalties exacted from bold disquisitors for their *temerity* (to use Blackstone's word) would not fail to awe all others into silence.

On the *spirit of juries*, then, the whole cause of a free press, and, eventually, that of a free government, depends. And if the prevalence  
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of alarm, and the habit of confounding abuse with use, have gained such an ascendancy over the minds of Englishmen as to make them really desirous of abridging the liberty of public discussion, and willing to lend themselves to the designs of power—"actum est de republica"—the reign of freedom is at an end, and its votaries have nothing to do but to wait in silent expectation till the course of events shall have revived a better spirit.

I shall only add, that if there be any public body in this country which exercises the privilege of deciding, without any intervention of trial, upon every supposed attack upon their own proceedings, and awarding punishments at their pleasure, it is obvious that the protection here suggested can have no place ; and no other control over their vindictive emotions can exist, than their own sense of propriety, quickened, perhaps, by the echo of the public voice, which even such arbitrary powers cannot entirely repress.

*Omitted*

*Omitted at p. 331.*

Spenser probably derived a hint of this remarkable personage from a passage in Plato's dialogue entitled "*Minos*," in which he says that this legislator assigned to Rhadamanthus the guardianship of his laws within the capital of Crete; but for the rest of the island appointed Talus (Ταλως), who was enjoined thrice in the year to make a circuit through the different districts, carrying about with him the laws engraven on tablets of brass, whence he acquired the epithet of *the brazen*.

Apollonius Rhodius, in his "*Argonautics*," gives a story relative to the same Talus, whom, however, he converts into a giant, defending the shores of Crete from invaders, by hurling rocks upon them from the impending cliffs. This being is also represented as "a man of brass," having only one soft vein of flesh in the ankle, a wound in which proves fatal to him.

FINIS.

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